No. 1 1945 Vol. XXXVI

"Where there is no vision the people perish"

The POETRY REVIEW

THE JOURNAL OF THE POETRY SOCIETY (INCORPORATED)
AND A MAGAZINE OF GENERAL
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The Poetry Review

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The Crux of the Problem

THE phrase "economy of words" has crept into poetic criticism until it seems as important a characteristic as feeling, thought, beauty. Inasmuch as art must be the idealistic individual reflection of nature capably mirrored in the minds of others, we may assume that nature is our basic poetic subject. There is nothing in nature that is economical; in fact, its expenditures for an infinitesimal reaction is prodigious. Ten thousand seeds, a hundred winds, twenty storms, suns and shade, dark days and light, months on end to produce one minor weed, the last concept in the evolutionary cycle of change. Not only is this expenditure in effort and effect beyond words, its synchronized acts beggar time and the vocabulary. Everything occurs at once; an honest and complete description of the passing moment would exhaust the dictionary and require the services of a million stenographers a thousand years. Am I extravagant in numbers? I think not. Therefore, what do we mean by an economy of words? A compacting and a repressing—a much in little? That could be accepted. A "much in little" therefore must through experience and connotation bring alive as nearly as possible the manifold colour, sound, odour and motion; it must not only bring back the years and their labour and fruit, but also the little "nameless unremembered acts"; it must climax the cumulative force of the past; it must attempt to return the whole while itself only a feeble infinitesimal part.

Any other conclusion is absurd. Keats and Shelley probably never considered an "economy of words" in thought or act. Theirs is a fluency that rushes to keep pace with their probing minds and seeing eyes. The very rapidity of their movement at times suggest a literary stuttering over the much to be expressed and so little time. But "much in little," yes: "Heard melodies are sweet, but those unheard are sweeter." "Beauty is truth, truth beauty." "When the lamp is shattered, the light in the dust lies dead."

No great poet has ever lived who did not love words for words' sake—their form, sound and suggestion, each word and phrase represents a chapter in living, and he varies their nuances delicately by new application. He is like a singer running the scale for some precious variant, some fuller or nobler tone. Repression in poetry is not a studied effect but rather the poet's pause over the moment of vision and discovery. Those few joined words echo on and on in his mind, bringing to life dead experience, experience beyond experience, the hoped-for and the forever-lost.

Poet, I ask, what are you trying to do? Express the expressible or the inexpressible? Leave to prose the former, yours is the impossible problem of the latter. The "full-

grown" poet almost accomplishes the mission: the door creaks and opens a fractional inch, we think we see and hear, but the next gust of living slams it in our faces. Keats' self-hypnosis, when "half in love with easeful death," takes us partially across the very threshold of the inexpressible.

Despite the modern aversion for abstractions, the poet's greatest accomplishment is the wielding of abstractions to life through coloured images that suggest the whole. For those few isolated images, clothed in flesh and blood and sinew, must carry the burden of the cosmos.

Despite these obvious factors there seems to be two non-concurring, non-poetical antithetical schools clamouring to be heard. The one writes in drab softness. Their work, though rhetorical, is colourless, inane, sweet. They are best represented in sentimental "arty" groups of self-advertised worshippers of art. They are exclusive in their shrieks of total ownership. For perception they substitute self-deception; for intelligence, sensitiveness, feeling they substitute that which they are pleased to call culture. The modern, nauseated at weakness and nothing, revolts to form an austere "arty" group that eliminates the sensuous perfection of the great and substitutes cacaphony for sweetness, imagining that this is strength. They too are exclusive and believe in total ownership. They beat the tom-tom of "economy of words" and emphasize "repression," "the thing itself," "originality," through a prosy wordinesss that in itself can connote nothing; for they fear the richness of life that they must portray as much as they do the meaningful phrase. As a communist is a frustrated capitalist, they are frustrated sentimentalists.

The crux of the problem lies in saying the unsayable. A few fragile words must carry the burden of universal memory, universal feeling and timelessness. They must awaken the subconscious of the individual and probe his heredity; they must ply his "soul" with nuances and related meaning until he feels that a matter which could never be expressed has actually echoed in his conscious mind. Yes, prosaically, this accomplishment may be tabulated as an "economy of words." Half of the words in the dictionary may fail and yet one short sentence or phrase may succeed. "The rest is silence."

(Lt.-Col., G.S.C., Fort Douglas, Utah.) *Cullen Jones.*

Lines on the Timelessness of Sin

TEN years ago you knocked your brother down,
Incurring no penalty except a frown.
Know that each tearless sin is permanent,
Engendering evil until atonement.
Ten years or ten days are of no importance,
The fly or the flower you hurt must have its repentance.
Centuries ago a Jew was nailed to wood,
And until that be atoned for as it should,
Christ will cry
From Calvary.

G. A. Wagner.

A Supplementary Greenwood Report

THE Greenwood Prize of £20 for the best unpublished poem of 1944 has been won by J. Redwood Anderson for his very original creation *Lazarus*, published in the last issue of THE POETRY REVIEW. This unusual poem and the significance and importance of the now established competition justify some additional observations. During the last two decades the new poets have been seeking a new form, something, it seems, more akin to prose than normal blank verse allows; but their efforts have not been crowned with success. They seem to have broken all the rules of traditional scansion without being able to apply anything strikingly new, while their knowledge of sprung rhythm has been limited to the verse of Gerard Manley Hopkins, rarely taking into account the sprung rhythm of the ancient Border ballad. Their most interesting verse has been based on the experiments of Robert Bridges.

But Mr. Redwood Anderson has, I think, managed to discover something tangible of the new form they were seeking, and this has happened because of his vast knowledge of conventional and classical prosody.

His *Lazarus* is written in anapaestic pentameter; which, however, does not mean that there are five perfect anapaests in every line, for that would mean fifteen syllables in every line (there are rarely so many), but that the anapaest is the *ruling foot*, and also that the anapaests generally take up more syllable space than the iambs and trochees. There are a very great many variations. Syncopation, anacrusis, and "epic-caesura" all enter into the make-up of this new blank verse, while a few of the lines seem to contain no anapaests at all. All this has been done to avoid monotony, because anapaestic measure can be very monotonous unless subject to many variations. Strangely enough, one of the top runners-up, W. Wall's poem, *The Way Home*, has been written in anapaestic lines (rhymed), but earnestness and vision have controlled the metre, so that monotony has often been avoided.

Redwood Anderson is a distinguished mystical poet of over twenty years' standing, more akin to Milton and Coventry Patmore than to any poet living. Perhaps during the next century he will be completely honoured, and considered a better poet than any of us. I think no other of this century so frequently sounds Milton's organ note. He has learnt from Robert Bridges as well as from Milton and Coventry Patmore, while his knowledge of the Latin hexameter seems to have had a strong influence upon the shaping of *Lazarus*.

Another poem of technical originality is Arthur Ball's Browningesque *In the Canteen*, relative to blank verse, though not blank verse, in each stanza some word inside the fourth line rhyming with the last word of the second line (this information was curiously misprinted in my former report) and also the last lines of the stanzas rhyming (the fourth with the fourth—too far away to be quickly discernible to the ear) with a change in the fourth lines from pentameter to hexameter, or to something resembling Redwood Anderson's technique.

Straightforward normal blank verse (with here and there a touch of organ note) is Leopold Spero's rhetorical *Nameless Warrior*; but Miss A. V. Stuart's *Patchwork Quilt* (a narrative poem) is written in more elastic blank verse, seeming to show the influence of both Browning and the later Shakespeare (it contains many feminine endings or overflowing syllables). On the other hand, most of the unrhymed lines in

T. W. Ramsey's *Fire and Ice* are written in unabashed free-verse or prose-verse, and have no metrical quality whatever (right away from the rhymed stanzas—some of which are very fine indeed).

I hope that all these poems will be published in full in THE POETRY REVIEW, together with some others specially praised in my former report, but unfortunately omitted from the October–December issue owing to lack of space. It was only found possible to print half of them. *Herbert Palmer.*

[Lack of space continues, aggravated by belated issues, with consequent congestion of accepted or acceptable MSS. and the accumulation of special matter needing early publication, but Mr. Palmer's authoritative and patient inquest on this important Greenwood Competition establishes a claim on more space for the accommodation of some of the shorter poems which should be read in conjunction with his comments, a valuable lesson in contemporary versification and criticism and a tribute to the significance of the Greenwood Prize.—ED.]

TO THE EDITOR

It is impossible not to be impressed by the work of J. Redwood Anderson, which Herbert Palmer has decided shall receive the Greenwood Premium Prize for 1944. The adjudicator considers it to be anapaestic verse, but thinks that others might take it to be iambic hexameters. What matter? This document needs no designation and no garniture. It contains no lyrical outburst. It may not even be a poem. To me it is just rhythmic prose and should be read as such. It is as if Lazarus came and sat down with us and quietly narrated his experiences and told us of the familiar ministrations of Mary and Martha. Not one word was forced; not once was there shown the desire to obtain an effect even by permissible means. The keynote was a great restraint; and like the acting of Eleanora Duse the triumph was within. This work of lambent imagination, yet simple in diction, never defaced by unnecessary emphasis or by any device of "modern" poetry, gave one the feeling that had he chosen Lazarus might have said even *more*. For some time after I had left off reading the impression of a revelation remained with me—as it has done when I have witnessed great acting or completed the perusal of a story in which the author was master of a memorable theme.—*Arthur Row, F.R.S.A., M.R.S.L.*

Sextet to Thought

I

O THOUGHT, I joyed in you as in a son
Who should live after me and scroll my name
On continents and seas, by whom high fame
For you and me might happily be won.
But is it so? When my last deed is done
You shall have earned as little praise as blame,
Whose fickle counsels teased my steady flame,
Who dimmed my light and yet provided none.

For I am wiser than my head; a sense
Which ponders not but leaps to certainty,
Claiming no measure of omniscience,
Is warm and strong within the depth of me.
Not you the source of my magnificence
My heart it is that beats immortally.

II

But now more softly for the journey's end,
Tamed by its soarings and its dizzied falls,
Yet, light with love and unsung madrigals,
No longer caring where the breezes tend.
Shall it seem strange you may not comprehend
What passes thought, but to the spirit calls?
While reason, caverned in its bony walls,
Breaks brittle wings which you shall never mend.

Ah! Thought, I was your pupil overlong,
You spoke me fair and took me by the hand
And we grew great with pride and rich and strong
And yet you clogged my feet in drifts of sand.
For I am Life while you to Earth belong
Who neither birth nor death can understand.

III

To understand! what need have I to use
Your feeble rushlight in the boundless dark
Where stars and planets dwindle to a spark
In lightless voids which even suns refuse?
I am serene before my last adieus,
Who know not when or whence I may embark,
For I return to join The Hierarch
Whom but in vanity your pride pursues.

Prisoned in bone and clogged with ignorance,
Your subtlety must challenge Truth in vain,
For you, despite your half-god arrogance,
Are spiralled dust which shall no heaven profane,
But haunt the Earth, or ride the wind perchance,
Till Life demands a brain and bone again.

IV

A bone and brain from that dark soil where now
My fading generation falls to Earth,
Whence unborn men shall take their myriad birth,
Sprung from the furrows which our sinews plough.

Whose mortal pride, behind another brow,
Shall breed illusion of immortal worth
Raising mirages in a mental dearth
To which their minds in reverence shall bow.

But I, this essence, this immortal thing,
This love, this parchless thirst I call my soul,
Which could not lift you on its fluttering wing,
But wore the jesses of your mean control,
Shall pass beyond your dust's imagining
Where time and space become God's aureole.

V

For you, Interpreter 'twixt me and this
Insurgent flesh, who once gave conscience heed—
Seeking my sanction for each word and deed—
Became a traitor steeped in artifice.
You never lacked for reason to dismiss
My censure, nor for hardihood to plead
A deed proved worthy if it but succeed,
Nor failed to call my scruple cowardice.

Creature of Time, the moment dimmed your sight
And blurred the view of immortality,
And now death's shadow creeps upon your light
For you have served a dark apostasy,
Who might have compassed Heaven in your flight
In Christ's perfection facing God with me.

VI

For you and I, conjoined, were more than king,
By faith omnipotent, by grace beyond
The utmost subtlety of sin, our bond
Of truth and reason an immortal thing;
We could have wandered in unending Spring,
Unknown to time, a blessed vagabond,
To whom as to creation's self respond
All things that run or rise upon the wing.

Upon that marriage death could cast no shade
Nor years fatigue, nor sober habit leaven
A compact which no mortal wisdom made,
Which owed no prompting to the deadly Seven.
O, Thought, long ere these limbs to rest were laid
We too, unknowing, had invaded Heaven.

"*Mercator.*"

The Patchwork Quilt

SHE lay, fingering the quilt. Her apple cheeks
(Once apple-blossom in her bygone girlhood)
Were winter-apple-ruddy on the coarse pillow.
Her clear blue eyes, washed clearer now in age,
Washed clean of earth's perplexities and passions,
Looked through the window, and saw not what they looked at.

She lay, feeling the quilt.
Between her fingers
The recollected texture woke to life
The dormant brain, the drugged and sleeping memory.
This was that cherry satin piece she set
In the patchwork coverlet for warmth of colour,
Remembering, as she clipped and stitched and shaped it
To its place in the scheme, its small significant diamond,
Remembering that Lammas long ago,
Her father from the fair, mellow with drink,
Tossing this fairing at his tall young daughter
To tie her flaxen plaits, and tease the lads
"Like a red rag to a bull."
His gusty laughter
Rose to her out of the grave she had forgotten
Had held him now this forty year.
She lay
Feeling the quilt, and then her far gaze shifted
To observe the cotton fabric, crisp to the touch,
That met the exploring fingers.
Yes, the pattern,
Blue cornflowers and bold poppies, snipped from the dress
(Made down, made over, done for long ago)
Snipped from the dress she wore that sultry evening
Picking lad's love and rubbing it for the fragrance
While tongue-tied Harry leaned on the farmhouse porch
And looked at her, and could not look away,
But said nought, and did nought; not then, nor any evening.
In her tired mind, sliding towards death's coma,
The past and present, the crisp feel of the cotton,
Bold cornflower blue, sharp perfume of lad's love,
Mixed in a haze of memory, leaving only
Harry's thick fair hair, and strong young pillared neck
To which her gaze slid round, while the troubled silence
Hung like a wall, a wall of glass, between them.
She sighed, and murmured out of her aged wisdom:
" 'Tis not the lads we love we wed: my Harry
An older, bolder woman made him kiss her
And then 'twas done; she married him out of hand.

Made a good wife too: they had fine strapping children.
Lad's love, lad's love."
A daughter, hearing her murmur,
Came to the bedside.
"Nay, mam, 'Dad's above?'
"You know right well he's not—this seven years
The dad's been gone; now rest ye, mam, now rest ye."
She pulled the patchwork coverlet higher up
The unregarding shoulders, and so left her.
The blanched and blue-veined hand slipped laxly down
Passing whole tracts of life, gay-patterned pieces
Snipped from this infant's frock, that young bride's garment,
Blue for a boy, pink for a girl: she'd had them,
As buxom children as ever Harry had bred;
Her Tom was a rare steady 'un, and a kind husband.
Her fingers paused on a small black patch of velvet,
Paused, and caressed, and the shadow of a smile
Wavered on the quiet face.
Black velvet like a lady!
That was Tom's notion, Tom the younger, her first-born,
Her wilful, taking lad, who ran away
To sea, but came home, facing his father's anger
(Tom's obdurate anger) to bring her bits of things,
Quaint shells and carven curios, Indian shawls,
And last, this velvet, "Enough for a dress-length, mother!
I want to see you at your ease, and sitting
Dressed like a lady, in the lug-backed chair.
Wear it to please me, mam."
He'd coaxed, she'd laughed
(Sitting there saying him nay, the while her fingers
Took pleasure in the rich and silky fabric
Flung in its prodigal heap across her lap.)
"Nay, Tom, 'tis not for me: what would I do
Wearing my velvet: cooking in it, and scrubbing!"
She'd scolded, loving him for the fond extravagance.
So back he went to sea, and the sea took him
In a frenzy, one wild night in mid-Atlantic.
A quick death, and a clean one; a quick death
She'd told herself, dropping her scalding tears,
But not on the velvet, never on the rich velvet.
Her thrifty daughter said: " 'Twill make rare mourning.
Let me run it up for ee, mam."
She shook her head.
That was not what Tom had meant.
When grief had passed
From pain to patience, then she took the velvet

(Honouring it thus) to the little village dressmaker.
She wore that gown for many, many years
With a still dignity, on rare occasions.
Up to the tenantry balls at squire's, and then
To grace her children's wedding feasts, the christening
Of children's children.
She never put it on
Without her thought of Tom, his laughing face
Flushed in the firelight, kissing her good-bye:
"Well, I'm off, mammy: I'll be home to see you
Wearing my velvet like a lady, mammy."

Her fingers lingered long on the rich pile:
Outside the windows the blue of evening deepened.

Her daughter came with a clatter, setting the lamp,
And turned the wick up shortly, and so left her.
The mellow glow picked out a shining surface
Of amber silk, lying there upon her feet
Too far to reach, but the remembered feel of it
Thrilled through her finger-tips—poor Nancy's gown,
Poor Nancy, that wild slut her son had brought
From town, from bold bad ways and an evil home
And married her. The shame of it still seared her,
The shame they all had felt, or had thought they felt
At her steady John's strange reckless foolish marriage.
Wild things of the woods she knew, and soon she saw
This wild thing of the streets was not far different;
Sulky and cruel only out of fear
But trembling to kindness, to be won with kindness;
Afraid of her husband's home, her husband's father,
And flaunting her tawdry finery to outface them.
But the yellow taffeta was not tawdry. She
Had held its glimmering sheen up in the bedroom
That night that Nancy, having delivered her child,
Lay spent, and done with life.
"See here, my poppet,
The gown you'll wear, having once more the figure,
And look your loveliest, for yellow sets you.
See, lass."
The stiff silk rustled.
The dark eyes,
Sombre, resentful, looked at her with one
Mute challenge 'gainst the world, one wild long look
Of disbelief and scorn: so Nancy died,
Accusing life.
She tended the puling child

That grew to a strapping, wholesome man.
The dress,
The yellow taffeta dress her daughter wore,
Altered to fit her figure, not to suit her,
That could not be.
Strange legacies we leave,
A taffeta dress, a new-born child—poor Nancy!
Legacies.
At the thought, troubled in mind,
Rallying her feeble strength, she called for Sue.
"Nay, mother, mother! What is it, mam?"
Her fingers
Roamed o'er the coverlet, piecing together her life
Mapped by its coloured scraps.
"Bury me in it,"
She whispered, grasping the quilt.
O, Sue was thrifty,
If Sue should fail her now, deny her wish,
Or cheat her after death!
"Bury me in it,"
She begged, her eyes imploring, her rattling breath
Snatching the words in her throat.
"Yes, mother, yes.
"Yes, mam, us shall."
Good Sue, kind Sue, a dear
And dutiful daughter.
So she died in peace.

Over the calm, still face, now statue-white,
Over the effigy hands crossed in her coffin
They drew the patchwork of her life, and left her
In that parti-coloured shroud to meet her Maker.

A. V. Stuart.

Fire and Ice

COME, my two creatures, ice and fire,
One on each hand sit down with me together,
Compound for an hour your differences.
Fire, the first love, the delight of my youth
Mutable, flowing, with heart ever changing,
Ice that but lately hast enraptured me,
Crystal, unchanging, diamond profound,
Let us hear your argument, one with another,
These the metamorphoses of fire,
Those the immutability of ice.

Tell me, Fire, your secret token,
Were you not first created when
The four great elements were broken
From three, by seven, nine and ten?

Out of the cloud of fire a hand
Stretched forth with air to round the sphere;
And the waters gathered together and
Grew dense that firm earth might appear.

The Shepherds were the Lords of earth,
Water by Babylon and Tyre
Was ruled; by air the stars had birth;
The Magi are the Kings of Fire.

Germ art thou in the seed of bread,
Potentate of the funeral pyre,
Let thy arcana now be said—
What is thy cryptogram, Lord Fire?

"All things have their change by me,
My key is mutability—

And in that change for ever young
I grow not old, but am renewed,
Wrath and passion for a tongue
Earth my cradle, air my food.

The great volcanoes of the moon
That scar her lacerated face,
Flamed with my beauty once, but soon
Were tired and spent; and in her race
Against the hurrying winters now
Her mutability is shown
In silver lustre loaned for show,
And changing of a borrowed gown.

So true it is that fire will change
His garment but his nature never—
The cold that locks her loftiest range
Of peaks in glassy death for ever

Is vivid still with various lights
That hourly kindle spire on spire
As one by one the frozen heights
Step forth to meet the eastern fire.

Where the dead ashes lay is burning,
Breathing and quivering of the ground,
Warmth to the frozen veins returning
And joy too exquisite for sound.

I could hold this glittering world
A moment in my naked hand—
And see, the yellow flags unfurled
Again, and molten glass the sand.

Mine is the archetypal power
That ravishes in beauty's name,
Engendering in that strife a flower
Of curling petals lanced with flame."

Ice, you are silent, have you not a word?
Come, speak to me of steadfastness!
Is it by your deed, serenest of minerals,
That all things grow weary and wrinkled with age?
The hands of Time are gentle and smooth
Nor has he malice to wither and stale
The form that he fashioned to carry his sickle:
His waters flow ever most sweet and clear,
Until by thy rough hand ribbed and arched,
Veined and cracked by a hollow spear,
Ultimate weapon in the hand of death
—Fire is at rest now; hear what negation saith!

"Is it not true that earth is a glass
To fire, as fire shines through the mass;
And that the marriage of earth and water
Has virgin, smooth-limbed ice for daughter?

That where the air runs fire runs too,
Winged helm and feathered shoe,
But air and water when they mix
Make tears for Acheron and Styx?

See how the rivers come to me
And the deep bosom of the sea,
The secret of the Scorpion's sting
I know and the sweep of death's dark wing.

It is the power of ice that holds
The crucible most radiant white
Where the unruly fire enfolds
It round with shivering delight;

Because the dark seed turns within
And sprouts forth golden filaments,
So white-hot sorrow burns off sin,
But glowing luxury, innocence.

Fire and I were brothers when
Creation's bubble filled with breath;

And still we triumph over men—
For he is love, and I am death,

By whom vibratory motion ceases,
Made slow with age, made still by me:
Soon determinate are the leases
Of life and fire and love, all three.

And when the nine great thurifers
That ring the sun are cold and bare,
And light the only thing that stirs
In that deep well, my hand is there.

Ice in the bones, ice in the blood,
A core of ice within the heart;
And as my long hand stills the flood
Of running thought, what crystals start

Upon the black frost-patterned pane
That once reflected fire's deep red,
A changing pattern in the brain,
—Crystalline now, serene and dead!

The deep curse imprecated then
On falsehood has returned again
To earth and water, where alone
They lie enlaced more still than stone."

The fire has dwindled—scarcely can its heart
Beat in the waste Sierra of the snow
Uncovered and relentless—turn again,
Scythe-swung pendulum, gather in your sweep
The speed of seeing and the warmth of hearing;
Rise up again, O gold and crimson tower
Of fire—speak of your beauty, not your power.

"What answer in the hollow of the wind,
Poised like the cobra lifted up to slay?
The eyes, like diamonds, remote and blind
To all but their own fury, burn, and they

Have knowledge of the glacier, the drift
Of snow that binds and lights again to burn
Ten summers' leavings off the ground and sift
Its burrows barren ere the fire return—

And I return with beauty in my grasp.
My spear-points ring the Arctic snows
With tongues of the Northern fire—a clasp
Of emerald leaf, enamelled rose.

I burn in caverns and the heart
Of mountains I make hot with rage;
In the unkindled coal apart
I lie and slumber in my cage.

I am awake in tropic seas
And in the glittering eyes of birds;
I sing in dragon-flies and bees—
And, secret poet, in thy words.

This is the beauty of stone and flower
The one reflected, the other made
Firm in the heart I fill with power
To lighten darkness unafraid."

"But winter trees have taught us how
That bare bones may be fair to see;
Regard this skeleton where now
Beauty outlined in filigree

Reveals a static loveliness
That needs no emerald attire,
More lovely in its nakedness
Than all the golden tongues of fire.

Consider the crystal of the frost,
The chiselled hexagram of snow
Where light though captive is not lost,
Though broken, reunites to show

The power of crystal, strength of cold,
To figure out the ultimate spells
Of all material substance, hold
A glass up to invisibles.

Beauty is one thing and the same;
'Tis but the fire that is reflected
And in refraction of the flame
My iridescence is perfected."

Which is the mirror, which the real?
Backward and forward goes the ray
And though the heart of ice may feel
It not, nor will it longer stay

Than fire glows, beauty burns,
It is in its reflection true,
And thrice refined and so returns
Back to its maker, made anew.

T. W. Ramsey.

The Survival of Rupert Brooke

"THESE hearts were woven of human joys and cares,
Washed marvellously with sorrow, swift to mirth.
The years had given them kindness. Dawn was theirs,
And sunset, and the colour of the earth.
These had seen movement, and heard music; known
Slumber and waking; loved; gone proudly friended;
Felt the quick stir of wonder; sat alone;
Touched flowers and furs and cheeks. All this is ended. . . ."

I am going to paint you a picture—a picture, not of a poet who died thirty years ago, but of a spirit, splendid and divine and English, that is very much alive to-day.

Rupert Chawner Brooke, the son of a Rugby master, was born at Rugby in 1887. He was educated first at Hillbrow Preparatory School, and entered Rugby at School Field in 1901. His father had become housemaster nine years previously, and School Field was the family home until 1910.

The house—"that palatial building," he calls it—is situated in a corner of the playing fields near the Island, and has the distinction that Dr. Arnold was for some time housemaster there before his celebrated headmastership. It is impressive more perhaps from the outside than from within, where stone passages and insanitary changing-rooms give it a dark, dank atmosphere. The garden, though small, is well stocked with flowers, and the long grass path where Rupert used to walk up and down reading is preserved with great reverence by the same old gardener. This, then, was the poet's home for eighteen years, and, if it be wondered that environment moved him to write with so light and lovely a pen, it would be well to recall his own words: "Intense surroundings always move me to write in an opposite vein."

His school career was successful but not outstanding. "He was never," says a contemporary, "a school hero." Neither accurate nor studious as a scholar, he preferred to write burlesques of the masters, and "when," he says, "I do an hour's 'work' with the Headmaster, I fill notebooks with erotic terrible fragments at which even Sappho would have blushed and trembled."

Let it not be thought, though, that his time at Rugby was devoted wholly to academic and literary pursuits. Brooke was not outstanding as an athlete; but he played for his house cricket eleven his second year, and was a member of both the school teams before he left. I found this reference to his prowess on the rugger field: "R. C. Brooke (11 st. 12 lb.)—a reliable centre three-quarter, who, though not brilliant, is usually in his place, and makes good openings, he tackles too high."

This may seem irrelevant in the discussion of a poet; but it struck me then as being a particularly apt description of his life—"Not brilliant, usually in his place, makes good openings."

The letters he wrote in his last year are radiant, and reflect the whole of his school life.

> "I am infinitely happy. I am writing nothing. I am content to live. After this term is over, the world awaits. But I do not care what will come then. Only, my present happiness is so great that I fear the jealous gods will requite me afterwards with some terrible punishment, death perhaps—or life."

That he was writing nothing was not strictly true, for it was about this time that he won the King's Medal for Prose with his essay on "England's Debt toWilliam III." Even in so stereotyped a medium as an historical essay, his humour had its inevitable outcome, and he prefaces the work with the sentence: "History repeats itself: Historians repeat one another." His reference to poets as "a tribe almost as inaccurate as the historians" seems to have found fulfilment in many of his later poems; but, apart from stray passages, the essay has little interest and, historically, lacks depth and brilliance.

Further literary undertakings were a paper on "James Thomson" and one on "Atlanta"; what he calls "an Enormous romance," but what was nothing short of a a lewd character study; numerous dramatic scenes and dialogues; and, of course, quantities of verse, most of it bad.

Despite these diversions, he worked sufficiently hard at Plato and Theocritus to win a scholarship to Cambridge in 1906. "He brought with him," says a university paper, "a reputation both as an athlete and as a poet, a combination supposed by vulgar people to be impossible. The populace," it continues, "first became aware of him when they went to see the Greek play, the *Eumenides*, and many of them have not forgotten his playing of the Herald."

He owed much of his interest in the drama to Rugby, a school much famed for this fountain of all arts, and lost no time in joining the A.D.C. at Cambridge, playing "Stingo" with commendable ability in *She Stoops to Conquer*. Later, in 1907, he helped with the foundation of a Marlowe Society, and played Mephistopheles with sincerity if not dramatic skill in the society's production of Dr. Faustus.

As a freshman he represented King's in various branches of athletics, but soon dropped the habit despite protests. He found at the time no pleasure in those outside activities which had meant much for him in the past and which were to mean still more for him in the future. He lived entirely for the mind, and took an active part in political and philosophical discussions. The chief advocate of the Labour Party at Rugby, he joined the University Fabian Society and became its President in 1909. He was a member of the Heretics, and founded the Carbonari, a friendly, intellectual society.

This was the only period of his life when a passion for cleverness found place in his modest, well-balanced nature, and it was but a passing phase. In the summer of 1909 he gained a second in the classical tripos, and from then onwards cut himself adrift from studies which were beginning to weight his mind, and which played a smaller part in his development than might be expected. He was able to find new scope for his talents and new outlets for his imagination in the more fruitful field of English literature. He had emerged as a moth from the chrysalis, and paused for a moment, "dreaming on the verge of strife," and "magnificently unprepared," to fan his wings in the sunshine of a new life.

But this sunshine was not to last for long. Returning from a Christmas holiday in Switzerland, and finding his father seriously ill with haemorrhage on the brain, he had to cancel all his Cambridge plans, give up "The Orchard," Grantchester, where he was living in easy reach of the University, and take over the temporary management of School Field. "Oh! and I'm so sad and fierce and miserable not to be in my garden and little house at Grantchester," he wrote to Mrs. Cornford. "I love being

there so much—more than any place I've ever lived in. . . . It's horrible of me to talk like this when I'm in the house with two other people who are infinitely worse off in happiness than I am, and one of them in pain."

His father's pain lasted but a fortnight. He died suddenly, and was buried on the day of the school's return to Rugby. His death left a very marked impression on Rupert; though happily the new duties gave little time for meditation. "I find I am an admirable schoolmaster," he writes. "I have a bluff Christian tone that is almost wholly pedagogic. Also they remember I used to play for the school at various violent games, and respect me accordingly."

At the end of the term Mrs. Brooke moved to 24, Bilton Road, a dismal-looking Victorian house, fairly spacious, but with a small garden. "Henceforth," wrote Rupert dolefully, "I shall have to play on other people's tennis lawns."

He returned to Grantchester in May and found himself "extraordinarily inextricable and necessary" in the multiplicity of Cambridge life. His dramatic interest prompted him to read (he claims) no less than twenty pre-Elizabethan plays a week, and he won the Harness Prize with a monograph on "Puritanism as represented or referred to in the early English drama up to 1642."

But impressions that he was a bookworm or a dull intellectual are dismissed by this colourful passage from *The Granta*:

> "He will tell you that he did not really begin to live till he went out of college at the end of his third year. . . . It is said that he lives the rustic life, broken by occasional visits to Cambridge; that he keeps poultry and a cow, plays simple tunes on a pan pipe, bathes every evening at sunset, and takes all his meals in a rose garden."

In this seclusive atmosphere he wrote much of the poetry in the 1908–11 section of his first book, and "it is on this section," says a reviewer, "that the volume must stand or fall."

It would be well though, in passing judgment on his poems, to bear in mind what Frances Cornford once wrote to me of them. "Rupert," she says, "cared passionately and minutely about the technique of his craft, and some of the poems are little more than a young man's exercises in mastering his tools." While the exercises are attractive ones it would be well to regard them as such and little more.

As to his own views on the publication, he says:

> "I've an insistent queer feeling of having got rid of poems I've written and published—of having cut the umbilical cord—that they're now just slightly more anybody's concern than mine, and that everyone else has an equal right and a faintly greater opportunity of understanding them. . . ."

And elsewhere he complains:

> "I horribly feel that degrading ecstasy that I have always despised in parents whose shapeless offspring are praised for beauty."

Meanwhile he had journeyed to the continent, spending three months in Munich, where he wrote *The Fish*. Apart from this, and "one or two severe and subtle sonnets in my most modern manner," he wrote nothing.

In the summer he returned to Grantchester, not to "The Orchard," but to "The Old Vicarage" next door. His new abode was long and low and shabby, one-storied, with an old veranda—not, one would have thought, an inspiration for "home thoughts

from abroad," even from the Café des Westens. "The garden," he wrote later, "is immeasurably autumnal, sad, mysterious, august. I walk in it feeling like a fly crawling on the score of the Fifth Symphony."

It was here that he worked on the first draft of the dissertation on John Webster, which he sent in at the end of the year, not getting a Fellowship until 1913. Critically the book is unsound in many places, though of the poetry much was written and a fairly just estimate was formed. But it is not a book to be read as a Bradley or a Skeat. "Its chief charm and value lies in its pervading temper, so strikingly characteristic of Brooke himself and of the movement in which he was so memorable a figure."

His literary work—weeks of writing with scarcely any sleep, sometimes without going to bed at all—led to a serious breakdown. "My cure," he writes, "consists in perpetual overeating and oversleeping, no exercise, and no thought. Rather a nice existence, but, oh God! weary." It also included a further continental tour.

Having returned from this in March, he set off again for Germany in April, spending most of his time with Dudley Ward in Berlin, where he wrote *The Old Vicarage, Grantchester*. But then, "God! I will pack, and take a train," and he was back in England again for the summer.

During this last visit he wrote *Lithuania*, a one-act melodrama founded on the well-known anecdote of a son's returning with a fortune to his peasant family, who kill him for his money before discovering his identity. In a prefatory note, Drinkwater writes that the play, though homespun, almost threadbare in texture, is not without the beauty that none but a poet could have achieved. It was produced at the Chicago Little Theatre, and was also played later for a charity matinee at His Majesty's, London.

From September 1912 till May of the next year, he lived in London, with an occasional Berlin visit, patronising every show from the Russian Ballet to *Hullo, Ragtime!* which he saw ten times. It was then that he and his friends, under the guidance of Eddie Marsh, laid the foundations of *Georgian Poetry*, an annual publication which did much to influence literary development at the time.

In May he set sail for New York on a year's travels. For details of these travels the reader is referred to *Letters from America*, a collection of Brooke's articles to the *Westminster Gazette*, to Sir Edward Marsh's *Memoir*, and to a short chapter, "Rupert Brooke," in Sir Edward's *A Number of People*.

He had two happy months in England before the war, renewing old friendships and making new ones.

He was staying with the Cornfords when war was declared, and describes his feelings in the essay "An Unusual Young Man," which is the last passage in the *Oxford Book of English Prose*:

> "As he thought 'England and Germany,' the word 'England' seemed to flash like a line of foam."

And further on:

> "He thought often and heavily of Germany. Of England, all the time. He didn't know whether he was sad or glad. It was a new feeling."
>
> "And he is dead who will not fight." He wrote: "I feel as if I *can't* sit still. I feel I must go as a correspondent, if I can't go as a fighter. Tell me if you hear of any job."

This letter was to Eddie Marsh, who was private secretary to Winston Churchill. In September Churchill offered him a commission in the Royal Naval Division, and he joined the Anson Battalion soon after with his great friend Denis Browne.

After a very short training, he sailed in October for Antwerp. "Everyone cheered and flung themselves on us, and gave us apples and chocolates and flags and kisses, and cried 'vivent les Anglais' and Heep! Heep! Heep!"

He felt satisfied with life, and, indeed, almost as if the whole point and purpose of it had always been the relief of the Belgian armies; but he had one regret—that he was unmarried. From Fiji he had written: "I *approve* of marriage for the world. . . . But not for me. I'm too old." He felt now, though, "What *Hell* it is that I shan't have any children—any sons." Lady Bonham-Carter (who was then Miss Asquith) wrote to me:

> "I think he would have married ultimately if he had lived. I know that he felt that regret about children before he died."

And she drew my attention to a line in one of the sonnets: "Their sons they gave—their immortality."

Here I should discuss briefly his religious outlook. Many assume that he was an atheist, but this is not strictly true. There are countless contradictions in belief to be found in his letters—as when he says: "I still burn and torture Christians daily," and elsewhere claims devotion to "the Established Church, whence I spring"—and apparent contradictions, too, in the poems as in *Mary and Gabriel* and the ironic lines of *Heaven*. Here again Lady Bonham-Carter gives a clue to the paradox. "I don't think," she writes, "he was a dogmatic atheist (though I certainly shouldn't have described him as 'a believer'). He had too much imagination to dismiss the Unknown. I think he groped—like most of us—in the regions of the spirit. I don't know how much confidence he felt in immortality. Certainly he had no *certainties*—one way or the other. Witty blasphemy in the young is no proof of unbelief—but his beliefs were not crystallized in a *faith* I should have said. He was still exploring life."

He returned from Antwerp after the retreat, and spent Christmas at Blandford Camp. He had a few days' leave in London, and entertained his friends on the money awarded him by the Admiralty in compensation for some lost MSS. Some days later, on leave at Rugby, he finished the five sonnets "1914," and these were the last poems published, though later fragments found after death show promise of still greater achievement.

On February 28th he left England for the last time, eastward-bound on the *Grantully Castle*. He spent an amusing seven hours ashore, at Malta, before proceeding to Lemnos.

They had an alarm, but no excursion, and sailed for Egypt, arriving at Port Said on March 27th. On leave in Cairo with two friends, he caught sunstroke and was sent to hospital. "I shall be all right in time for the fighting, I hope and believe," he wrote to Lascelles Abercrombie. But, alas! his eagerness to rejoin his men proved fatal, and when, less than a fortnight later, he lay comatose with acute blood-poisoning, the doctors on the French hospital ship held that nothing but a strong constitution could have helped him to fight the disease. The account of his passing needs no repetition for those who are familiar with Sir Edward's *Memoir*; and for the others

I should hesitate to spoil these passages. Let the following lines of a fellow-poet suffice as a tribute:

"He's gone.
I do not understand.
I only know
That as he turned to go
And waved his hand
In his young eyes a sudden glory shone;
And I was dazzled by a sunset glow,
And he was gone."

A writer in *The Times* in August 1918 says:

"One turns from the thought of him not with a sense of completeness and finality, but rather to wonder and to question still: what would he have been, what would he have done."

The answer is perhaps to be found earlier in the same article:

"One fancies that he would in the end have framed a speech that came very close to the modern point of view—a subtle analytic poetry, or prose perhaps, full of intellect, and full of his keen unsentimental curiosity."

Or perhaps the answer is to be found in Drinkwater's preface to *Lithuania*:

"Had he lived he would almost certainly have exercised his maturer powers on play-writing."

The problem, though, must remain unsolved, and his death, like that of Shelley, is one of the countless tragedies of literature. That he was a great poet it cannot be claimed, that he might have been none can tell; but he is essentially a poet for youth, and an embodiment of all those qualities of splendour and chivalry of which our nation is justly proud.

". . . There are waters blown by changing winds to laughter
And lit by the rich skies, all day. And after,
Frost, with a gesture, stays the waves that dance
And wandering loveliness. He leaves a white
Unbroken glory, a gathered radiance,
A width, a shining peace, under the night."

Timothy Rogers.

[Our contributor is about to publish *A Richer Dust*, a biography of Rupert Brooke.]

Before the Sun

SOMEONE must have come while I was gone
And left three pansies where last night was none
And starched the daisies' bonnets for the sun.

Someone must have only now passed through,
For every flower still listens, and the dew
Pricks every stone with periwinkle blue.

Kunigunde Duncan.

Spring . . . after Illness

OF late I wandered by the Styx
And watched old Charon ply his oar
And listened as he tried to fix
My passage to the further shore,
And for a while I was inclined
To hearken to his urgent plea,
But afterwards I changed my mind
And said. "Another day: We'll see."

And now I do rejoice that I
Refused, for Spring has come again,
The white clouds riding in the sky,
The birds that sing their age long strain,
To tell me that this present earth
In Spring, a greater rapture yields,
A happiness of much more worth
Than lingers in Elysian fields.

Some day I know that I shall cross
The river that shuts in our life,
And perhaps sum up the gain and loss
Accruing to me from its strife,
But for the time, I turn away
To where the blossom is unfurled,
Apple and pear—and later, may,
And so forget that shadowy world.

J. Sackville Martin.

Despot in Hades

DEEP in the gloom, a cowering ghost, he crept,
Who once had battered nations under heel.
And down the darkness gibbering columns swept,
Stalking like leopards, wriggling like an eel.
And voices mocked him; bony fingers turned
To stab him with a long accusing thrust.
And from the murk cold eyes, pit-hollow, burned,
White skeletons challenged in the writhing dust.

Startled, he wheeled about. But where to go?
Wherever, in the haunted mist, he fled,
The shades, like leaves that hoarse Octobers blow,
Rattled around him . . . till, with drooping head,
Reeling, self-blinded, still he faced the vast
Avenging host of his own murderous past.

Stanton A. Coblentz.

Last Journey

WHAT shall we carry when the night
That, cloud-like, looms above life's day
Curtains the comfortable light
Of star and flower and water-way?

The deep-sea peace of pool and moor,
Beneath whose waves the mind may sink
For hour upon luxuriant hour,
Whenever it is pain to think?

The blue, round goblet of the sky,
Brimming with heaven's pure, dawn-crushed vine
That brings a lustre to the eye
Beyond all power of earthly wine?

Bird-note bubbles that churn the hours
With pebbled music, silver-clear;
Or startling wonder-lure of flowers
Heaving their honey on the air?

Immortally within our minds
These, and all other joys we know,
Shall travel with us when the blinds
Twitch to be drawn and we must go.

Wilfred H. Bartlett.

Love Must be Spoken

LOVE is a spendthrift word
In the luminous days, in the first years
Of discovery. So incautiously said,
And so eagerly heard, when the hunger
And thirst of the heart is intemperate.
Love is a trumpet call that rings on the lips
Or the thin flute note of uncertainty;
But whichever it be, love must always be spoken.

Let not the mutual heart
Evade the habitual years! Sanction
The lips to speak, let not the bright word fade!
Those who part at the grave with their love
Unsaid, like misers with gold unspent,
Are the dead who walk dumbly in bitterness
Performing a soundless sacrament.
Ineffectual ghosts! Love must always be spoken!

Juanita Peirse.

*Australian Poetry**

ITS VIRILE HERITAGE SHOWS INFLUENCE OF VIGOROUS, WORKADAY LIFE OF THE OUTBACK

BERNARD SHAW once commented on the large quantity of poetry written in Australia. He noted also that the productivity of our poets appeared to fall off as they reached maturity.

Perhaps this is not uncommon, for in most countries poetry is not a lucrative affair, and few Australians can say with Furnley Maurice, "I claim to have preserved, with no regrets, an unhurried life-long loyalty to poetry in Australia (an unprofitable cause) . . ."

Unhurried his work may have been; but "Furnley Maurice," the poet, was obliged to live a double life as Frank Wilmot, the bookseller. The most mature Australian poet of recent years, his development typifies the best of modern Australian trends.

His first book, published after his return from the first world war, contained several poems that rank with the best of that period in the English language, notably the searing "To God from the Warring Nations." Like his fellow poet of the First A.I.F., Leon Gellert, his attitude to war was closer to that of Wilfred Owen than of Rupert Brooke. Stark and unsentimental, Gellert's *Songs of a Campaign* went to the heart of the typical Digger's experiences at Gallipoli, while the note of protest that Maurice struck was carried on into the period of peace, warning his countrymen not to forget—

> That war's the fruits of blasted modes root-rotten
> And not a painful thing to be forgotten.

He could also write lyrics of extreme beauty; for example, on the rich Dandenong ranges outside his native city of Melbourne. His most effective book, *Melbourne Odes*, which appeared in 1934, revealed him as a poet who, in his own words, "followed a natural tendency to draw imaginative significance from everyday things." He rejected high-flown, "poetic" images, keeping close to normal speech, and with fine-spun, brief and sensitive verses he could capture the impression of the vegetable markets, a symphony concert, the agricultural show. One of these odes was written "upon a row of old boots and shoes in a pawnbroker's window," a poem lit with deeply human values, humour and indignation at the devastation of the Depression.

He was strongly influenced by Bernard O'Dowd, who is Australia's only major poet to date; a man who spans the period between the great Nineties, when our national consciousness and our national school of literature first took shape, and the period of "disillusion" which spared Australia no less than Europe.

Bernard O'Dowd came by the royal road to poetry, reading Milton at the age of twelve, gaining honours in philosophy at Melbourne University, entering the Victorian bar, and immersing himself, as that lively critic of his own generation, A. G. Stephens, put it, in "law, history, religion, spiritualism, socialism, communism, anarchism, and mysticism." His philosophy derives from Walt Whitman, with whom he corresponded, and the democratic struggles of the Nineties. His first volume, *Dawnward?* (1893), was charged with Miltonic thunderbolts against oppression, while at the time of Federation, in 1900, he visioned a splendid future for his young nation. . . .

* Exclusive to the POETRY REVIEW, by arrangement with Commonwealth Government Minister of Information.

Last sea-thing dredged by sailor Time from Space,
Are you a drift Sargasso, where the West
In halcyon calm rebuilds her fatal nest?
Or Delos of a coming Sea-God's race?

Classical in his thought, profoundly philosophical, hammering out his austere quatrains, and his later more complex forms, he was something entirely new in Australian poetry, for hitherto the field had been monopolized by rollicking balladists with long, loose-jointed periods and hearty familiarity. True, Henry Lawson and Banjo Paterson worked up their ballads of swagmen and boundary riders, droughts and sheep runs and prospectors into a memorable and popular literature, but they belonged to an age that was passing with the new century. They were in a sense our "folk" poets.

O'Dowd, within thirty years, produced a large amount of poetry, much of it of the first magnitude. Introducing his first collected edition in 1941, Professor Walter Murdoch, Australian essayist of international reputation, remarked, "Whether it is an enviable thing to be a classic in one's own lifetime I do not know; but that is the fate of Bernard O'Dowd." In his seventy-seventh year, he is still living in retirement, in Victoria.

The poets of the period between the two world wars have sung mostly in a minor key, though in the main they have avoided the "decadence" which so many critics have found in pre-war European poetry. This is because our heritage has been essentially masculine; in the past Australians have done their thinking out of doors, rather than in drawing-rooms. The vigorous workaday life of the outback has left its mark even on the city poets. Action has taken the place of inner contemplation, although the philosophical day-dreaming of the bushman and his practical understanding of nature, have been carried over into the poet's outlook.

To prove the general rule there has been that picturesque exception, Christopher Brennan, whose rolling, sonorous poetry is as rich as music, and as difficult to grasp intellectually. The bulk of his work was produced before the last war. A classical scholar who had travelled widely in Europe, he was actually a romantic and an innovator. Ignoring the "jolly swagman" of the balladists, he introduced Australia to the French Symbolists, drew his inspiration from Verlaine and Baudelaire, though this manifested itself in his forms and general technique more than in his ideas. He is even less widely known than Furnley Maurice, for the good reason that his poetry has only once been published, and then in a limited subscription edition. The Commonwealth Literary Fund, sponsored by the Federal Government, is to publish a more accessible collection shortly.

Despite his high standing in the literary world, he has only one follower of any note, Robert D. FitzGerald, a formal and painstaking poet whose emotions have been shrouded by the strictness of his intellect. His long, introspective *Essays on Memory* won the Sydney Sesqui-Centenary Prize, though he is best known by the cloudy romanticism of *To Meet the Sun*.

Twenty years ago it appeared as if the delicate lyrics of Shaw Neilson, Dowell O'Reilly and Hugh McCrae would become a dominant feature, but, though they have been well regarded overseas, their influence is hardly felt to-day. Their younger generation—competent poets like Kenneth Slessor and Kenneth McKenzie—have

never fulfilled their early promise. Caught between fantasy and sophistication, they lost direction, though McKenzie's verse drama on the youthful Shakespeare had considerable vitality. Another verse playwright who has been developing strongly in the last three years is Douglas Stewart. His *Fire on the Snow*, the tragic story of Scott's expedition to the South Pole, was a tremendous success when broadcast by the Australian Broadcasting Commission. He has since written a romantically-coloured drama of Ned Kelly, the nineteenth-century bushranger who has become something of a national hero. A New Zealander by birth, Douglas Stewart gained a reputation in England with his first volume of poetry, *The White Cry*, while *Elegy to an Airman* and other war poems have drawn considerable attention to him in Australia.

The stresses of the war have created a new interest in the Australian arts, one of the most remarkable symptoms being the amount of poetry coming from the armed forces. A number of small books have appeared, which, if they cannot compare with the quality of Furnley Maurice and Leon Gellert, indicate a spirit radically different from the last war; no despair, nor cynicism, but a sense of confidence in the future.

Ian Mudie, a young poet who has been serving with the A.I.F., was recently released to collect a volume of soldier's poetry. He has also written a good deal on his own account; poetry very different from his earlier manner, realistic, and concerned with the issues of the war. He has appeared regularly in *Salt*, the Army Education Service's enterprising magazine, which has published a great deal of excellent material from the troops.

The work of the Education Service in fostering cultural matters and the growing interest in the arts on the home and battle fronts foreshadow a cultural revival in the post-war Australia such as we have not seen for nearly two generations.

This tendency has found its most effective expression in a poem written *To the Australian People*, under the threat of Japanese invasion in 1942, by Leonard Mann, who is also a novelist of the first rank. Like Furnley Maurice a quarter of a century before, he issued an appeal to his fellow countrymen—

> So while our forces rouse
> Against totalitarian tyranny
> And nearer peril, now make we these vows
> The hopes we pledged redeemed should be
> By those who live;
> This time no false dawn shall deceive
> But they shall see like a red flag unfurled
> The sun arising of a juster world.

(Australian Author and Playwright). *George Farwell*

Busy as I am with legal and linguisitc research work, I still enjoy reading THE POETRY REVIEW that was to me like a renewal of an act of faith in the surviving beauty of life when we were so consistently and cruelly hammered by the enemy that there was strong temptation to lose all faith in human goodness. I wish good luck and prosperity to the Society, and it is my regret that with my varied cultural and other professional interests I am not in a position to be more financially generous. You who maintain the tradition of English Poetry render great service to the spiritual Empire of Mankind: J. AQUILINA (LL.D., Ph.D.), Malta.

NEWS FROM MOSCOW:

Poets and Poetry in War-Time Russia

To Perpetuate the Memory of Anton Chekhov

On the occasion of the fortieth anniversary of the death of the Russian writer Anton Pavlovich Chekhov the Council of People's Commissars of the U.S.S.R. has resolved:

1. To erect monuments to Chekhov in the cities of Moscow and Taganrog.
2. To rename Malaya Dmitrovka Street in Moscow Chekhov Street.
3. To establish a State Chekhov Museum in Moscow.
4. To set up a bronze bust of Chekhov in the village of Melikhovo, Moscow Region.
5. To publish the complete works of Chekhov.
6. To give Chekhov's name to:
   (*a*) the Taganrog Drama Theatre;
   (*b*) the Zvenigorod District Hospital, Moscow Region;
   (*c*) the Istra Secondary School, Moscow Region;
   (*d*) Secondary School No. 17 in the town of Alexandrovsk-on-Sakhalin.
7. To put up memorial tablets on homes where Chekhov lived.
8. To institute Chekhov scholarships in the following educational establishments:
   (*a*) The Lomonosov State University in Moscow—five scholarships of 400 rubles a month each for students of the philological department and one scholarship of 800 rubles a month for post-graduate students of the department of Russian literature;
   (*b*) The Leningrad State University—three scholarships of 400 rubles a month each for students of the philological department and one scholarship of 800 rubles a month for post-graduate students of the department of Russian literature;
   (*c*) The Vladimir Nemirovich-Danchenko Studio—five scholarships of 400 rubles a month each for students of the studio;

The meeting was opened by Vladimir Potemkin, Member of the Academy of Sciences and chairman of the All-Union Committee for commemorating the fortieth anniversary of Chekhov's death. He spoke of the dream this great writer cherished of a life based on justice and truth. Towards this truth he called the people in his talented works. He foresaw it with the intuition of a true artist. The writer's dream came true in the new, free Russia where creative labour that transforms the world became the law of life, for without such labour, Chekhov claimed, life was meaningless.

"Forty years have passed since the death of Chekhov," Potemkin said. "Our country has scaled the peaks of glory. The eyes of all mankind are turned to her. The peoples and soldiers of Russia are bringing liberation to the world and victory over the worst enemies of culture, progress and civilisation. Chekhov would be happy could he see the present consummation of his ideals. He would be proud in the knowledge that his native Russia, which has built a new world, is now being crowned with the immortal glory of victory in the present war."

Poets in Autonomous Republics

The conference of writers of the autonomous republics of the Russian Federation

lasted four days. Speakers gave an outline of the development of the literature of the fraternal Soviet republics, of the work of writers in war-time and spoke of the activities of the republican unions of Soviet writers.

In his report on modern literature in the Daghestan republic, Kamil Sultanov, secretary of the Daghestan Union of Soviet Writers, raised several points of principle.

"In their genuine humanism and heroic spirit, the heroic Avarian national epos 'Khochbar' and 'Nadir Shah' and the Kumykian folk songs," said Sultanov, "are in close affinity with modern times. Suleiman Stalsky and Hamzat Tsadas are torch-bearers of the best traditions of folk epos. And in their footsteps follow the national poets of Daghestan, the Lakhian poet Abutalim Hafurov, who took part in erecting defensive works—author of that fine poem *The Flood*, telling of the Nazi invasion, the frontline poet Abdul Vahab Suleimanov, the poet Anvar Adjiev—author of the talented poem *Murtaza*, and other writers."

The works of Yakutian poets were dealt with in detail. Fainna Kornilova emphasised the great successes achieved by Yakutian poetry in recent years, mainly through the works of Sergei Vasilyev, Ellyai (S. Kulachikov, Mikhail Timofeyev-Tereshkin, story-teller Sharaborin Kumarov, and others. Mikhail Skuratov gave a detailed analysis of S. Vasilyev's book of verses *The Oath*. S. Lipkin spoke of national epos as reflected in modern literature of the fraternal republics.

A New Translation of "Hamlet"

Professor Mikhail Morozov is one of the most prominent Russian authorities on Shakespeare, his work and his time. He has written a number of books about the immortal English dramatist, among them: *Commentaries to Shakespeare's Plays*, *Shakespeare's Language and Style*, and numerous essays about Shakespeare's dramaturgy and the history of the productions of Shakespeare's plays on the Soviet stage. Recently, in view of the abundance of translations of Shakespeare into Russian and the languages of the other peoples of the Soviet Union and of the constantly growing interest in Shakespeare shown by Russian translators, Professor Morozov had the happy idea of producing a series of translations of favourite Shakespearean plays. Professor Morozov began with a translation of *Othello*. This was followed by *Hamlet*, on his work on which Professor Morozov supplies the following personal explanation:

"I have just finished translating *Hamlet* into Russian. Like my previous translation of *Othello*, that of *Hamlet* has been done in prose. I made no attempt to produce a poetic reproduction of the original. My only aim was to transmit all shades of meaning with the utmost accuracy. My translation, of course, cannot be used on the stage. Its main purpose is altogether different. Firstly, it is meant to assist those of our poet-translators who have an inadequate knowledge of the English language to translate Shakespeare. Every additional aid in this respect augments the ranks of the translators of the works of this great dramatist into Russian and the languages of the other nationalities of the Soviet Union. I am firmly convinced that only a poet can translate Shakespeare.

"Secondly, my work, being furnished with detailed commentaries, can help stage directors and actors who are working on *Hamlet*. And, finally, my translation can help all those of our readers who wish to read *Hamlet* in the English original.

"I took the text of *The Cambridge Shakespeare*, edited by E. A. Wright, as my

basis. I also, however, constantly referred to the texts of the old editions, Quarto and Folio, and to *The New Shakespeare*. I made a careful study of Wilson's work. In those cases where the selection of a version was debatable I chose one of them, but always gave in my commentaries the translation of other acceptable readings. I also translated the most interesting conjectures in my commentary. Wherever I came across a debatable place that allowed of several different interpretations I cited these interpretations in the commentary. My purpose was to exclude myself to the utmost, to give, in so far as this was possible, the most objective picture. In this sense my translation is in direct contrast with a literary translation in which not only the original is reflected but in which the individuality of the translator-poet is also inevitably felt.

"Since the division of the play into acts and scenes was not made by Shakespeare I discarded it. Although, as I have said, I did not purpose to produce a literary reproduction of the original, it seems to me that the absence of such division intensifies the dramatic quality of this great tragedy; we then have before us an uninterrupted flow of actions in which the contrasts so characteristic of Shakespeare are more clearly defined. My next work will be a translation of *King Lear*."

AN ELOCUTIONIST'S TANK

"We march on
through revolver barks,
that in ships,
dying, in poems,
we shall be embodied and other long-lived works.

To all those who gathered together one foggy November day on the tank drome of the Kirov plant these lines from one of Vladimir Mayakovsky's best poems—"To Comrade Nette—Ship and Man"—have an unusually triumphant ring. They are read by Vladimir Yakhontov, one of the best interpreters of Mayakovsky's poems, a Stalin Prize winner, from the turret of a powerful tank called "Vladimir Mayakovsky." This tank was built on the personal funds of the elocutionist. The "Vladimir Mayakovsky" tank has just come off the conveyor. At a factory meeting stormy applause greets the words in which the poet expressed his cherished dream "I want the pen to equal the gun."

A CHILDREN'S POET

Millions of young readers in the Soviet Union are well acquainted with and fond of the work of Samuel Marshak, Stalin Prize Winner. Besides his work on satirical verses for newspapers, war posters, "TASS Windows," etc., the writer is continuing his intensive work in the field of children's literature. He has recently completed a new children's poem called *War-time Postman*. This poem is in the nature of a continuation of *Postman* which he wrote twenty years ago. Whereas in the earlier poem the letter in question travelled all over the world in the new poem it only travels 300 yards—to the men on the forward lines under enemy fire.

The poet is also continuing his work on English ballads: a new and more complete edition of English ballads and songs translated by him has recently come off the press. Besides the older, known translations, this edition also includes new translations of Tennyson, Browning, Shelley and other English poets. At present Marshak is working on a play—a Russian fairy tale—in verse and prose.

Question and Answer

THERE was a raid in the moonlight
Bombs from a star-blue sky.
Others were killed as I watched them
Killed as I stood nearby.
And I have survived them. Why?

The will of God, some answered me,
Which no man can foretell.
And others, that the eyes of fate
Were watching as it fell;
Or I was lucky. Well?

Is this the compass of reply,
A God of secret mind;
Chance that defies the reign of law
Or fate, of purpose blind?
Is thus the soul confined?

I will not have it so. I hold
That man by law is free.
And each and all of humankind
Of high or low degree
Is lord of destiny.

Then what of God? All things are God
All wisdom and all sin.
The whole is in the humblest part
Or love would ne'er begin.
God is the Whole, within.

Man sows, and reaps accordingly.
Salvation is not bought.
His God is universal law,
His destiny self-wrought,
The product of his thought.

Time is a tool that bides his will
The earth unbounden wide.
Birth after birth shall life pass on
Consumed, yet glorified.
Man dies, but nothing died.

For each, as slow the cycle turns
Will foolish-wise create
The yet unwakened circumstance
That, born of love and hate
And folly, men call fate.

And yet, with fortune ill content
We folly-blind complain,
Unknowing in the round of years
We sleep and wake again
With new, untutored brain.

There's no complaint. Or God or fate
Man reaps as he has sown.
In justice shall he live and die;
His fortune is his own
Though to his eyes unknown.

Christmas Humphreys.

Residuum

MY eyes rejoiced, being privileged to see
This England, in the days before the foe
Wrought war's abominable waste of woe;
Conscripting Hell in Death's conspiracy.

But now they weep at man's new infamy;
Halls, temples, towers; by wanton force laid low;
Archives in stone; immaculate as though
Built not for time but for eternity.

When lust is baffled by its own extent,
The last bomb hurled, the last shrill warning wailed;
After a bitter, penitential Lent,

There will be beauty's Easter unassailed;
And on its altar, as a sacrament,
The little flowers of love that have prevailed.

G. S. Oddy.

The Lovers

HOW late was the hour,
How great was the prize,
When I sought in your bower
The Love in your eyes;
In vain Time would call
Till daylight would peep,
The best bliss of all
Is stolen from Sleep.

" 'Tis late," you would chide,
"It's time to retire,"
Your thoughts would divide
'Twixt prude or desire;
When loath I would move
Your fond arms would keep,
The best hours of Love
Are stolen from Sleep.

How friendly the night
For fond lovers made,
The glamorous light,
Its comforting shade,
Romance fills the air,
Stars carnival keep,
While Love is astir
It's foolish to Sleep.

Leslie Greene.

Poets and Pretenders

THERE are things in this world which decline classification and refuse to go into a pigeon hole. Of such is "Was there a Summer," a narrative poem by Irene Rathbone (Constable, 2s. 6d.) which we observe, and without surprise, has already gone into a second edition. That we can call the authoress neither poet nor pretender on the strength of this book is obvious to anyone who reads it, and perhaps it has no place in this article. But its whole is somehow, and amazingly, a poem although it would seem to aspire (in spite of its title and dress) not to this but to a plain narration of a poignant and, in spite of its consummation, delicate love affair. There is some perplexity in our mind, therefore, as to the reason for the choice of form. As a short story, told with vivid skill, it still lacks, perhaps, that subtle twist of drama which is necessary for a prose appearance in a magazine; but does it really gain anything by appearing in free verse? It succeeds effortlessly anyhow. However that may be, we read it from cover to cover and found it an enthralling blend of delicate comprehension and certitude of expression—of tender, fragile things handled with a firm sureness—whereby the keys of authentic emotion were touched and responded, and prose became poetry without effort or pretence.

Poetry of a more traditional sort with Pegasus on a more or less tight rein is contained in *Poems* by James Blyth (Favil Press, 3s. 6d.) and judging by the dedicatory poem the author was a disciple of Lord Alfred Douglas, which is to swear allegiance to what the age of chivalry called "manege" and to ride the winged steed with ceremony and no lather. The author was killed at the age of seventeen in 1942, while serving in the Merchant Navy, and it is too much to expect, therefore, that we have here more than an indication, a faint penumbra of the future edifice; but the work now presented has maturity beyond these few years of life and the regrets, for promise cut short, expressed by those who sponsor this book in a foreword and an appreciation may therefore be justified. There was undoubtedly a power of true poetic expression in James Blyth. We were struck by the sensitivity of his mind and a power of expression which is even here impressive.

On deck I heard only
The chaste and inviolate,
Stainless, immaculate,
Deep, inarticulate
Sea song so lonely.

Deep in my mind
I heard your voice calling,
When the deep dusk was falling,
Then die in the wind.

And then there broke over me
The vast, irrepressible,
Strong, irresistible
Vague, inexpressible
Surge of the silent sea.

Lest our opening remarks should have conveyed an impression of an art too closely patterned upon a past, but not by any means dead, fashion, we should like to quote the following from "Alpha and Omega," a poem from which only selections appear in this book:

That night we came into a wood:
And the dead leaves were falling,
Singing, calling,
With echoing voices:

We are the burnt leaves,
Burnt in the summer of our fierce desires
We are the sapless leaves,
Lifeless leaves, dead leaves,
Dancing to doom.

* * *

A poet and perhaps one with much unuttered which the world can ill spare. Who

knows? But he has left us the first fruits of his spirit and there is little more to say save, in his own words

There with the wild wind let him fly
Across the dark and starry steep,
And in its bosom let him lie
Wrapt in infinities of sleep.

The next volume is poignantly enough from the pen of another young sailor, this time of the Royal Navy, who was reported missing on March 18, 1943, before his twenty-third birthday. The volume is privately printed, and is by Robert H. Thorne. The work is of a slighter character and at the same time more vigorous than that just reviewed. Comparisons are, of course, irrelevant as well as odious, though difficult to avoid sometimes, but it seemed to us that here was work of a maturity more appropriate to the age of its author, concerned indeed with living and with life, but on an emotional plane natural enough to a young naval officer. His verse is lively and tuneful in the main and obviously written for his own diversion and that of his friends. The needful gift for expression was there to enable him to record his thoughts, experiences and aspirations but there is little introspection. The world and his profession were, we suspect, much too engrossing and exigent to allow of much dreaming.

The seventh issue of an Army magazine published abroad and called *The Flame Thrower*, reaches us from its editor, John T. Kirk. With its verse content alone we are concerned. We hasten to congratulate the editor upon his contributions which, though not numerous, are worthy. Trooper Kirk has been assisted by another Poetry Reviewer, Capt. John Manifold.

Privately printed too is *Poems of Storm and Calm*, by Michael Gardner, and in his recorded impressions of nature the author is both observant and striking in his expression

How stern the wind's stiff fingers
Run through the grass
With the precision
Of great authority well-planned,

but we like him too in other manifestations where he can show an economy and deftness which is admirable. The following lines, inspired by a statue in Oporto, are an instance and a good one of this:

Could ever flesh be supple as this stone
Which, moulded by the touch of beauty's hand,
Responds, and in some liberty its own
Dreams. O if flesh could only understand!

Save for the heaving pulse and the blood streams
It lives, the arms as white, the shoulders bare
As ever Man's. And the heart too, it seems
Deep in a stony solitude somewhere.

We would remark that the author or the printer is in error with the vocative O in the last line of verse one. The book is to be commended for its good, unpretentious diction wherein words are used with simplicity and clarity but still contrive to leave an impression of strength and adequacy.

Over Guiana, Clouds, by A. J. Seymour, printed in Georgetown, contains some good things and begins with a longish poem, the title piece, which is in some sort descriptive of that Colony as it has addressed itself to the author. Some of it is strong stuff, too strong, but such digressions into unpleasantness may be ignored by the sophisticated. In other poems the work rises at times to a lyrical note and it is in this mood, the simpler mood of joy in nature, that we like Mr. Seymour's work best.

* * *

Louis MacNeice, to the extent that he is anything but himself, is a bridge between "classic" and "modern" verse, for while refusing to be trammelled by conventional forms he yet sets himself his own limitations of form and abides by them. Thus, in his latest and best volume, *Spring Board* (Faber, 6s.), "Bottleneck," or "Sentries," are essentially "modernist" yet definitely "formed." It would seem that this established poet has grown less morbidly cynical and more genuinely introspective, as though he were beginning to see through the mist which he had hitherto been content to describe. The "News-Reel" shows the difference, with its hope

> " . . that fact is a façade
> And that there is an organism behind
> Its brittle littleness, a rhythm and a meaning,
> Something half-conjectured and half-divined,
> Something to give way to and so find."

In the valuable process of giving way he has produced a series of brilliant character studies of which "The Conscript," "The Mixer," "Schizophrene" and "The Libertine" are very fine. Of the two longer poems the first, "The Casualty," a modern In Memoriam, could only have been written by MacNeice, and the last verse but one is typical:

> For above all that was your gift—to be
> Surprised and therefore sympathetic, warm
> Towards things as well as people, you could see
> The integrity of differences—O did you
> Make one last integration, find a Form
> Grow out of formlessness when the Atlantic hid you?

The longest and last poem, "The Kingdom," is a series of vignettes of human types, each of whom in his or her own way discovers the Kingdom, and the last page rises to heights of genuine poetry which few of the modernists achieve.

All poets have their own style, but though the style may be invariable the form should, and in the greatest does, vary enormously, and the trouble with George Barker is that three-quarters of *Eros in Dogma* (Faber, 6s.), is monotonously the same, both in form and emotional level. The latter reflects the same hopeless, visionless, bankrupt despair of the bulk of modern writers. Thus, in what is described as a Secular Elegy we find,

> And so in circles over existential deserts
> I and you wander, lost, and arm in arm;
> Lost, lost. And the visions paying us visits
> Lead us to mirages where, in a morning dream,
> We forget the headaches and the lost Edens.

The extent to which many of the poems are undoubtedly erotic, as distinct from merely sexual or obscene, is all to the good, for it is only right that poets should lead the way in restoring sex to its proper place in the pattern of our discussed and extroverted lives, and not kept in a dirty cupboard viewless, airless and unseen.

The Editor of *Poems from Ireland* (*The Irish Times*, 7s. 6d.) describes this selection from poems printed in *The Irish Times* as a cross-section of *The* Irish poetry of the past ten years, though most have appeared since the war. The Editor of the *Irish Times* is right when he says in his Preface that the writers "have been almost wholly unaffected by the impact of the world struggle," and a clue may lie in the words of Patrick Kavanagh, in his "Memory of Brother Michael":

It would never be spring, always autumn
After a harvest always lost—
When Drake was winning seas for England
We sailed in puddles of the past
Pursuing the ghost of Brendan's mast.

Equally true is Richard Rowley in "Ancestors,"

The words I speak, my written line,
These are not uniquely mine,
For in my heart, and in my will,
Old ancestors are warring still.

This would not matter if these writers wrote with some fervour of thought or emotion, but the young girl of inspiration fails to mount the horse of poetry, as Donagh MacDonagh, who edits this anthology, insists on putting it in "Invitation."

The horse of poetry nibbles
The summer-riddled grass,
Lifting his heavy head
To the young girls as they pass . . .

As it happens, Mr. MacDonagh is one of the best poets in his own anthology, for his "Torca Hill" has genuine feeling, with that sub-passionate hopeless pain that seems part of the Irish cultural make-up. Too few of the rest are in any way memorable, and a poem that one does not desire to remember is a poem that as such has failed.

The translation by S. A. de Witt of the poems of Walter Mehring, under the title *No Road Back* (Samuel Curl, Inc., New York), together with Christopher Morley's *The Middle Kingdom*, poems 1929–1944 (Harcourt, Brace & Co., 1944), show in no uncertain manner that the good, bad and indifferent in verse rub shoulders in the United States as in this country. Walter Mehring's pilgrimage of pain from Vienna to Marseilles before and during the present war is set down in what Mr. de Witt describes as "modern, hard-packed, bristling German." It is modestly added that "the inclusion of Mr. Mehring's original German text should satisfy those readers who may find fault with the translator." Translation in verse is supremely difficult to do well, and this specific example, though probably close to the literal meaning of the original, passes by the pure ore of poetry, unless in an occasional phrase like "the bright shore of your heart," and an occasional fine stanza like that in

the "Odyssey out of Midnight" section, beginning: "The ageless granite wherefrom Zeus sprang. . . ."

The Middle Kingdom is humorous, imaginative, caustic, tender and topical, a book to be grateful for. Some items are considerably below the standard Chaucer, Mr. Morley's master, would have approved; nevertheless, Mr. Morley has studied poets ancient and modern to excellent purpose. The verse collections of merit comparable with *The Middle Kingdom* published over here during the present year by our island poets could be counted on the fingers. Here is a poet who, at his own gay level, is of imagination all compact. Though these are in a sense occasional pieces, as many of Leigh Hunt's and Thomas Hood's were, they are none the less authentic.

Mr. Rex Warner has made yet another version of the *Medea* of Euripides (John Lane, 7s. 6d.). He has adopted an iambic hexameter metre. And Mr. R. C. Trevelyan has rendered Virgil's *Eclogues* and *Georgics* (Cambridge University Press, 7s. 6d.). In the latter he has used very readable blank verse, but for the former he has chosen "an unrhymed verse of seven, and occasionally eight, accents." All my life I have appreciated the metre which William Morris adopted for his *Sigurd* and for his translation of the *Odyssey*. For those unfortunates who have never yet met it, here is a sample:

> "And the masters of its song-craft were the mightiest men that cast
> The sail of the storm of battle adown the bickering blast."

But in reading the experiments of Mr. Warner and Mr. Trevelyan I find that I have, so to speak, to keep on construing the scansion. I confess that I prefer the monotony of Shakespeare's and Milton's blank verse.

Southey died just over a hundred years ago, and Mr. Henry Newnham, with the aid of Major Southey Edmonds, a scion of the Laureate's family, has produced *Homage to Southey* (Sylvan Press, 8s. 6d.). This is a slim book of under 70 pages. It consists of, firstly, seven short poems by Southey. These include the jingling *tour-de-force*, "Lodore," and that school-room triviality (which could hardly have survived but for its being such), "The Battle of Blenheim." But apart from the noble lines "My days among the dead are past," there is here nothing by Southey which a serious lover of poetry would linger over. The rest of the book consists of 17 pages of poems by Major Edmonds, and an unexpected but far from unwelcome bit of padding, some 17 pages of such familiar poems as "Blow, blow, thou winter wind," Hood's "Bridge of Sighs," Poe's "The Bells," Wordsworth's "The Daffodils," etc.

Mr. Newnham in his preface holds forth on the lesson to be learnt from old Caspar and his grandchildren. I doubt if Southey himself would have fully agreed. He, like ourselves, lived through an age about which, for many a day, it seemed too possible that History might have to record "Another mighty Empire overthrown," and when Southey's friend Wordsworth gazed at

> "the coast of France, the coast of France how near!
> Drawn almost into frightful neighbourhood!"

A profounder poet than Southey less than a quarter of a century ago put into the mouths of our fighting men, in a day of like menace, this defence of their action:

"Nay, we well see what we are doing,
Though some may not see—
England's need are we:
Her distress would leave us rueing.
Hence the faith and fire within us
Men who march away."

When *The Wind and the Rain* was founded by Michael Allmand, a signpost towards sanity in matters literary was the result. Now we read in the Winter issue that Captain Michael Allmand died in Burma during June 1944. He has been posthumously awarded the Victoria Cross.

In this Review the kernel is sound. Possibly the prose treating of poetry is better than the verse, which, though it sustains a certain commendable standard, is as yet rather too sophisticated to make the most of the imaginative ideals its writers follow. Two articles, "The Poet's Perspectives," by D. S. Savage, and "The Long Pursuit; and Search for a Synthesis," by Dallas Kenmare, have much in common in the way they attempt to show—and largely do show—that a "feeling for the ultimates and depths of existence" is essential in the writing of good or great poetry. Such words, by the first-named of these thinkers, are significant when allied to the much-needed statement that inner coherence, the *sine qua non* of all writing which is to outlast the sheet it is written on, forsook a too prominent band of "social poets" in the 1930's; this was observed by many to whom the names of Hardy and Hopkins—and D. H. Lawrence whom Dallas Kenmare appreciates with accuracy—represent living offshoots on the many-branched tree of English verse.

A burning sense of justice and pity makes the verse of Dallas Kenmare different from anything written by anyone else. In *Beyond the Stars* (Burrow's Press Ltd.), first published early in the war, she writes:

> I begin to understand the eternal music, deeper than the cry of the sorrowing heart. . . .

This is the confession of one who has delved far below the surface, till she records sun and storm, like the willow-wands of which she catches the essence in a single line:

Willow-wands, oh willow-wands, pink-flushed, silver-tipped, so silken-soft . . .

Paradoxically, her very sensitiveness is probably something of an enemy so far as her concrete poetic achievement is concerned. *Lyrically* she is mature, a singer with a tone akin in wistfulness to Francis Ledwidge; she is at her best in the short lyric. *For Ever* (Burrow's Press Ltd., 2s. 6d.), concerns itself with dramatic monologues by six "great woman-lovers of history and legend," to quote the dust-cover. Here Miss Kenmare may find a difficulty. It is *her* voice which sounds in these narratives of La Beale Isoud's or Ophelia's. Yet this is a book so free from affectation, and so alive with sincerity, that we are almost ready to accept what is offered, and to refrain from recalling the superb restraint in the technique of, say, Charlotte Mew or Christina Rossetti. Certainly in daring flights of the imagination into realms of simple beauty Dallas Kenmare is a poet of no mean order.

Form and Substance

Wartime Harvest, by Marie Carmichael Stopes (Alexander Moring, Ltd., 5s.).
A Great Rushing of Wings, by Clarence Winchester (John Crowther, Ltd., 5s.).
Who Live in Unity, by Laurence Whistler (Heinemann, 5s.).
Far from the Land, by James Monahan (Macmillan, 4s.).
Love and Elizabeth, by Kenneth Hopkins (Sylvan Press).
Poems, by Lynette Roberts (Faber, 6s.).

Wartime Harvest has a preface by Lord Alfred Douglas, and a reply to a request for a preface by George Bernard Shaw. Both are typical and both are wary. Lord Alfred dogmatises on the matter of form and declares that Dr. Stopes, having mastered the form of the sonnet, has won half the battle of writing "fine poetry." We do not think so. Rather would we say that having mastered the form she—or anyone—has gone barely one-hundredth part of the way. What does the mastery of form mean in this case, anyway? Simply that an arbitrary, restrictive and archaic rhyme-scheme has been adhered to. Naturally Lord Alfred is very jealous for the good name and fame of the sonnet for it is a form of verse in which he has excelled and by which he will long be remembered. But the simple fact is, as we see it, that the majority of sonnets in perfect form would have been better poems had the writers rid themselves of the bogey of form and had been free to write a twelve, fifteen or sixteen line poem —if need be—with the rhyme and the spirit flowing to a less restrictive extent as it listeth. But let us pass on quickly before the angry cries of the formalists, the disciplinarians, and Lord Alfred reach us.

We agree with him on one point and that is that the best poem in the book is the elegy, "Instead of Tears." This will be familiar to POETRY REVIEW readers as it first appeared in the July 1942 issue and they will remember the novel and pleasing typographical pattern of the stanzas. All, however, may not have noticed the unusual rhyme-scheme which runs A B C D E F F E D C B A. So far as we are aware this is unique, and as a pioneer, in this as well as in other fields, Dr. Stopes deserves a salute. Whether in practice it is a form which will be taken up by other writers is very doubtful. The time-lag of eleven and nine and seven lines before the mating line is reached will probably be considered too great for the rhymes to be savoured and appreciated; but it is an interesting and commendable experiment. The poem is written, it may be remembered, in honour and in memory of Lt. H. William Rose, R.N., of whom Dr. Stopes has drawn a most attractive portrait, and the gallant company of H.M.S. *Cossack*, and contains some dignified and moving lines:

You have no foothold now on solid earth
The sky, the sea, the beating sea of tides
Sway with your multitudinous appeal,

There is an impressive array of sonnets written to such diverse personalities as Homer, Hitler, General Smuts, and Lloyd George, and on a variety of themes from the primrose and true love, to the destruction of the House of Commons. From the opening lines of the sonnet to Hitler:

You, worse than execrated homicide
Diseased and foul, fit for eternal scorn!

and those on the opposite page addressed to General Smuts:

Embodiment of matchless fortitude
In a great reign's far vision and design,

one can detect, reading between the lines, where her sympathies lie. Of the other work in this book the love poems are probably the best. Dr. Marie Stopes's name will long be held by multitudes in affection and respect.

Mr. Clarence Winchester (*A Great Rushing of Wings*) sings of the beauty of the earth and sky and "all things lovely"—the title of one of his poems—and in his earnest desire to bring beauty to us would even "gild all the petals of all the flowers." His work will appeal to many, particularly those "discovering" poetry for the first time, and we can see the protagonists of this kind of verse holding the book aloft and fiercely declaiming, "Now this is poetry. You can have all your modern stuff in exchange for *one* of these poems." On the other hand, we can see the advanced critic flicking the pages of the book and proclaiming, after one minute's inspection, "Mush." And there you are, the fight is on—thrust and parry, challenge and jeer, scorn and invective, blood pressures rising and a regular to-do. We have all seen it so often. But where do we leap in? And on which side? Neither, for we believe they are both wrong. Why should those who seek primarily for beautiful imagery and charming melody in their poetry and are little concerned with the deeper meanings and sometimes difficult symbolism of the newer writing be so antagonistic towards the latter and be so very sure it has nothing for them? And why should those concerned almost entirely with the latter so often affect a tiresome superiority in their attitude towards writers in the more traditional style. This mutual denigration is foolish for there is surely room for good writing in both schools—and the hundred and one in between. Of the charlatans and the cliques and the sycophants, wherever they are found, they can best be ignored.

To return to Mr. Winchester, his weakness, and that of so many like him, is that he so often writes of commonplace beauty in a commonplace and too facile manner. The diction and the imagery of such writers may be beautiful but they are so often only saying what has been said ten thousand times before. Their idiom, at such times, is worn and all freshness and virility gone from it; it is little but a jingle-jangle of over-smooth coins. Such phrases as—we quote from Mr. Winchester—"soft music on quiet evenings, and the moon majestically riding among the stars," "the singing of a sphere," "the flowers—their satin raiment wet with evening dew," "when the magic of moonlight embroiders her star-spun gown," have a tendency to pall with constant repetition even for the most sentimental of us. The moon is a fatal trap for most poets, anyway, and all but the most skilled would be well advised to keep clear of its deadly rays. Few are able to deal with it in a manner which avoids all banalities and clichés. And if there is to be full health in his writing, rather than a greyly-spreading stupour, these the poet must avoid at all costs.

Mr. Winchester is probably at his best in "Song at Night" and in the title poem, "A Great Rushing of Wings"; and in this poem we select as his best and cleanest lines:

Their first enmities
Fell when we dwelt in peace and our most splendid skies
Grew cloudy with hate, while all nature's charm
Was lost in aerial violence and alarm.

Who Live in Unity is printed on stout paper of pre-war thickness which helps to add bulk to what some may consider rather short measure for the price. But that is a grossly commercial approach to the book and touches the publisher rather than the author. The work consists of one poem and is concerned with the evergreen and complicated problems of married love and of reunion after separation. It is written with all the skill, insight and delicacy of touch which one has come to expect from Mr. Whistler and there is more than a flavour of T. S. Eliot about it. Who but T. S. Eliot could have written the final poem in this sequence? Laurence Whistler evidently. Here is a pick-me-up for the bored, the blasé, the idle (if any, these days) and the inconsequent:

> To be presented with a day.
> As if one should discover on the quilt
> This overwhelming present, a white day.
> Unwritten, just created, still a blank,
> Quickly to be removed, and then given back
> Bound up in some relentless manuscript.
> To have the writing of this day. To be
> There at the extension of eternity,
> There at the one creative point in time.
> To be in fact the artist. And to view
> All living as the Work, and all the Work
> As artists do:
> That is, with reverence, and a rich delight.

Let this be engraved on all bedroom ceilings throughout the land.

Far from the Land is another collection of poems written by a young serving officer under the arduous and difficult conditions of active service. All who have wrestled with the strict rhyme and metre of formal verse and have spent many a seething hour endeavouring to perfect a single line, or complete a stanza, will sympathise with the Forces poets who turn so readily to *vers libre* for their vehicle of expression. Some may have no desire for any other form, irrespective of the time and solitude they may have available, but others will wish, in the days of their greater leisure, to retire to their quiet workshop and there to mould and turn their material in serenity and find new joy in the craftsmanship of the poet's wheel. Mr. Monahan may be one of these. These poems are of war, for the most part, and are not free of the cynicism and doubt which form so prominent a part in the make-up of the service man of to-day. It is a perfectly understandable element and none but those who accept the land-fit-for-heroes-to-live-in visions and promises at their face value will challenge his right to express it as Mr. Monahan does. Thus, in "Prisoners' Return," he portrays the disembarkation of wounded men at the docks:

> This got my dull eyes stinging—
> those docks like Whitehall, Coronation day,
> all jumbled with handkerchiefs, but full of singing
> and words without meaning that meant welcome home,
> and every tug was hooting welcome home,
> and through it all that ship, those curious faces
> of shattered, smiling boys.

They board a train:

> And that was the end . . . .
> But not quite the end for me . . . Through the last
> notes fading,
> I heard gaunt voices singing in the Strand
> and I saw a dishonoured uniform, that cloth
> of the glazed, ex-Service blue, their medals too
> and the flag of the cap-in-hand.
> And there, beyond,
> was a pavement-piano in Trafalgar Square.
> * * *
> So at the last I am frank and will not own
> I am blinded by bitterness. Come ten years later—
> my friend, come then and say: this bitterness
> was blind.

These lines, we must add, do not show Mr. Monahan at his poetical best; they are, in fact, amongst the least distinguished in the book but we quote them for the message they contain. And here is his approach to the trap which is the moon:

> The moon has put her garment of white madness
> upon this night, upon this shining common
> that a leaning mist has slurred. Far nightingales
> are ceaseless. Trees are a sinister net,
> hiding attainable skies; and crickets near
> suddenly sing against the nightingales . . . .

We think he has acquitted himself well and by this lunar yardstick we look confidently to his future.

Mr. Kenneth Hopkins (*Love and Elizabeth*) says:

> They say I write of matters out of fashion
> In poems not of politics but passion;
> 'Tis not my choice alone, but bounden duty
> To celebrate Elizabeth and Beauty.

And so he does in forty odd pages, pleasantly, wittily and, in the main, competently. If there is an Elizabethan sapor about most of the poems there is yet a modern and keenly perceptive approach to the subject. How fortunate among women is Elizabeth whose charms, and the devotion she inspires, are here so tenderly and durably portrayed—if only she can overlook the epigram to Ruth.

Faber poetry books we pick up gingerly for during the war years they have reached some pretty startling "lows" in the quality of paper used. Their reply to such a charge would doubtless be: better to print on brown wrapping paper than let good stuff pass by. And perhaps they are right. In the volume of *Poems* by Lynette Roberts, however, they have combined good poetry with good paper and the result is pleasing to all the aesthetic sensibilities.

This is a first collection of poems in volume form by Miss Roberts although her name will be familiar to the *avant-garde* of the younger intellectuals. And here let us

say that this is a book for the advanced rather than the general poetry reader. By some it would, in fact, promptly be dismissed as "this modern stuff," a vague and unsatisfactory term which is in much overuse in regard to poetry. It is obviously for the discerning reader to take all good work in his stride whatever its generation. Some of these poems are not without their obscurities and esotericisms. Others, at first reading difficult, will smooth out and give a satisfactory yield. Miss Roberts has an original, vivid and arresting style and much technical skill and variety in her verse forms, these ranging from sapphics, villanelles, sonnets and englynion to *vers libre*. And if any of the "anti-moderns" after a glance at the book should feel that Miss Roberts has nothing for them perhaps we can prise open the oyster of their mistrust with

> Pack of stars in full cry icing the heavens

and

> Every waiting moment is a fold of sorrow
> Pierced within the heart.

and

> White village, I lost my love.—He went floating
> Brushing the wet seas.

and (of a bird self-trapped in a room)

> Wail-ing . . . pal-ing . . . a desolate phantom
> At the bath rim purring burbling trilling soft sweet
> Syllables of sinuous sound to a liquid moon.

There is a peacock variety in these pages and glinting ore for those who delve. Here, to conclude, is "Rhode Island Red":

> Spade jackets and tapping jackdaws on boles of wood
> Song of joy I sing.
> Prim-pied under sky full of fresh livelihood,
> Smile for eye of man.
> Outhouses sweet with air stand whitened by the flood,
> Of sun blanching spring.
> In plate green meadows sheepdog and farmer brood,
> On galvanised can.
> Calling cattle from celandine and clover to mood,
> Song of joy I sing.

II

Smoke After Flame, by Hal Summers (Dent, 3s. 6d.).
Stormy Harvest, by Stanley Snaith (Dent, 3s. 6d.).
The Axe in the Wood, by Clifford Dyment (Dent, 3s. 6d.).
Shadowed Victory, by Arthur Stringer (Hodder & Stoughton).
The Dreaming Falcons, by William A. Younger (Hutchinson, 5s.).
Selected Poems, by Archie Lamont (Oliver & Boyd, 1s.).
Against the Lightning, by Hugh Popham (John Lane, 6s.).
Day of Fire, by Leonard Bacon (O.U.P., $2.00—11s. 6d.).
The Weaver Birds, by Ian Serraillier (Macmillan, 6s.).

This list is headed by three very neat, compact, reasonably priced, and attractively produced volumes from J. M. Dent & Sons. Of *Smoke After Flame* we read on the jacket of the book, "It is not often that a publisher seeks out a poet." That, surely, might be termed a meiosis. But here is a more or less unknown poet, and one previously unpublished in volume form, whom the publishers ferreted out and craved from him the honour of publishing his work. That is enough to make anyone sit up be he reader, critic, or merely a would-be fellow poet. And the result? Is there a flaming and clashing of stars, a bursting and flooding of song and a great glory leaping from the page? Hardly; but for a first volume it is a most interesting and imaginative collection. There is a freshness of thought and expression:

Shake out, shining wind, the listless
Flags of air . . . .

And the drake's uproarious bark skips over the pond

Now let the sun set up a ladder of shade
To my windowsill . . . .

A few of his lines are careless and unmanageable. We should hate, for instance, to be called upon to read aloud the poem concluding with the line: "With a love for what is and is not that is unending."

Try it yourself, Mr. Summers, six times very quickly. But at his best Mr. Summers seems to us to be very good. Not daily do we come across the enduring beauty and simplicity of such lines as:

O make no alteration in my love.
Keep her always the same, no look nor touch,
Gesture nor feature altered, but still such
As in whose sameness I all strangeness learn
And all varieties in her hand's turn.

He is probably at his best in "Shake Out Shining Wind," "The Spaniel at the Window," "For Nicholas," "O Out of the Wild Uncivilised Bracken," "Hostage" and, if you like, "In Piccadilly." He does not explain the cause of his sudden ebullience in Piccadilly. Maybe he had just had a very gratifying interview with his publishers who had confirmed him in his tremulous belief that he was a poet; or maybe he had just found one of those many commodities that are so elusive at the present time; or maybe it was just that he had made his first date with his first love—no matter:

In Piccadilly I leapt off my feet.
Steep from the sky O light make your power-dive.'
I who was one of the dead, see, I am alive.
Strike down, good sun, kindle the sparkling street.

A million seeds of sown colour are growing.
Shine, sun, transfigure the fantastic shapes
Of carved masonry, tousle the stone grapes
With the bright and dark of your sudden coming and going.

The past is divided from me by a channel of sleep.
I have turned out of yesterday as out of a side street.
It is a new day, the fields are shot with green wheat.
I take up my bed of despair, I walk, I leap.

For those select few who are prepared to pay hard cash for their poetry, here is good value. For the others, still very few and select, who consider actual purchase going a little too far but who, nevertheless, are prepared to read the stuff, here is a title to note and ask for from their library.

The flavour of *Stormy Harvest*, and something of its quality, can be gathered from a glance at the titles—"Mountain Corn," "Birds in the Flax," "After Rain," "The Pool of Stars," and so on. Although mostly slight there is a pastel delicacy and grace about this collection of nature poems and a true craftsmanship. Each word, we should imagine, has been long weighed and tested by the poet and then with loving care embedded in the mosaic of his lines. Formal rhythm and rhyme is mostly lacking, but what of that when, now and again, the breath is caught by the snow of his words, fresh in the warmth of May, as in "The Signpost"

Who turned the post led feet and wits astray.
The map became a prank and paradox.
But I forgave him for the wasted hours
When I found in the rocks
—Most delicate and scentless of mountain flowers—
Snow, fresh in the warmth of May.

As to the greater part, these are poems of nature in peace. But even in the war poems absorption with nature dominates his thought and imagery:

A hedgerow favour in his cap,
He went, false-blest, to find his rest.
Now there's a sprig of desolate blood
At his breast.

The third, and certainly the best known poet in this series, is Mr. Clifford Dyment. Although not, apparently, a prolific writer he has a certain evanescent quality and detachment which is his own, and for the comparatively small bulk of his writing he has secured for himself a name and modest fame which is sometimes a little puzzling. At least, it is not easy to single out with precision the virtues which have brought him to the fore, apart from the fact that his talent, whilst original (although there is a distinct affinity to D. H. Lawrence at times) makes no specious display of the fact. Romantic rhetoric is not one of his failings. Here, for instance, is a sample of Mr. Dyment's prose, entitled "Holidays in Childhood":

"Last year Harold was making a boat for his small cousin from the north country. His tools and timber were not very good, but he had clever fingers, the youth Harold, and he had shaped the hull with all his skill, given it narrow lines to slip through water, and cut the keel to give it lovely poise. The hull was finished, and the sails were ready—Aunt Jane had sewn the sails, though Harold had to show her nearly everything. It was going to be a trim and speedy ship."

Whether Mr. Dyment is justified in chopping this sort of thing up into "poetical" lines as, in fact, he has done, giving it wide margins and an ample page and calling it a poem—these lines are an extract, by the way, and not the whole poem—is a matter for argument and one which has been considerably debated in these pages in the past. We will just say this: there is many a novel written in good, clean prose which, if intelligently dissected, would yield a hundred and more poems of the "Holidays in

Childhood" type. And were we to take a novel of an exceptional and highly florescent kind such as, say, Joyce's *Ulysses*, why, the yield would be more like a hundred volumes. But we are, perhaps, not being quite fair to Mr. Dyment. If we are suggesting that he is, on occasions, sailing pretty close to the wind in this matter of poetry and prose, we do not wish to give the impression that he is typically thus. Here is one of his lyrics:

Hair wild as the wheat,
Hands loose as the wind:
Will this joy ever
Come to an end?
As sure as the stars,
As sure as the sun,
The price to be paid
Is oblivion.

The flower will hang
Its beautiful head
And a stranger will step here
And find it dead.

Whether it is true that this new collection shows Mr. Dyment developed to maturity, as his publishers claim, we cannot say, but if it is true the result is a shade disappointing.

Shadowed Victory, by Arthur Stringer is a long narrative poem in blank verse pleasantly written but quite undistinguished. The theme concerns three Canadians, two men and a woman, caught up in the conflicts and problems of the present war. One goes light-heartedly to the wars and dies at Dieppe; the other remains at home to plough and love the land and lose his girl. It concludes:

And Clyde went back
To his own acres sad with autumn light,
And from an umber furrow lifted up
A handful of dark soil.
He stared at it
And wondered why the love of woman still
Should trouble men who had their land to love
And pondered why a world that ached for peace
Should stumble down the blood-soaked paths of hate
And blindly seek their shadowed victories.

One wonders, not unkindly, who will buy narrative verse of this type; but may we be confounded and the book romp through several editions.

There are wings about me: nothing but beating wings
and a sobbing, striding song no human sings.
Up through the coils of the heart in its childhood-sleep
great wings are rising, ascending out of the deep
cleaving the circles of safety, the enchanted rings
which safeguard childhood from the perilous things.

For those who like their poetry in this guise, Mr. Younger (*The Dreaming Falcons*) is their poet. But although there is an earnest striving towards great heights and much nebulous splendour, he will not be to everybody's taste. In fact, in spite of the claim on the jacket that his poems are "strong, clear and eminently digestible" some will find them the reverse. Lines such as the following, we are afraid, will prove too rich for most digestions:

His mane swung behind like a dream-ghosting cloak
streaked with hard flame that some hand had ungloved,
spun from the looms of the coiled winter smoke
as grey as the eyes of a pale girl loved.
As he leapt, it swept forward and flickered to bite
quick gold through the old green cloth of the trees
till the clots of the leaves burst outward to fight
the ritual of death on the sails of the breeze.

We presume Mr. Younger is a young man and has many years before him to outgrow this sort of thing. Obviously he has a lively imagination and even if it does get a little out of hand "in a fine frenzy rolling," he should be able to bring it to heel in time. We wonder if he will forgive us if we suggest its gentle purging by means of a daily pill compounded of Job, Isaiah and Ecclesiastes? Probably not.

Selected Poems by Archie Lamont is a mixed bag, both as to quality and content, of Scottish and other verse written over a twenty-year period. Of no special merit, the book yet contains some sensitively evocative poems of the lovely Scottish coasts and lochs and islands with the almost inevitable undercurrent of sadness and desolation.

Against the Lightning is a first collection of poems which was awarded the poetry prize in a recent literary competition conducted by The Bodley Head and in making their choice we should think the adjudicators were not far out. For although Mr. Popham states that they are "poems of mood only, conceived in circumstances that offer merely an odd, uncertain corner of the day," they display, for so young a writer, a remarkable maturity of expression. The title poem consists of a series of impressions in free—very free—verse of the life of a Fleet Air Arm Pilot. This cannot be described as front-rank poetry, nor would the writer claim it so, but it is written with all the virility and colour one would expect from a fighting man who has yet much of the poet, the observer, and the philosopher in him. Of the shorter poems, these, still remembering that they were written in "odd, uncertain corners of the day," reveal a penetrative and imaginative quality which should carry him far. There seems little doubt, in fact, that more will be heard of Mr. Popham. For quotation here are three verses from "In this Sunlight":

In this sunlight it is easy to be brave,
  and necessary as the squadrons soar
in remote, neat formations; as our love
  crosses fresh frontiers in the coloured air.

And yet the day's quality is abstract here,
  untested, sudden, secret and apart,
as the damped flames within the rubbish fire,
  the early blossoms burning round the heart.

To-morrow fingers the familiar things
  away from courage, tears, this hate, this love.
To-day we watch the chivalry of wings
  and find it in the sunlight to be brave.

Do not be put off, by the way, by the Teutonic lettering on the jacket of the book.

What interests us most in *Day of Fire* is the format and typography. Produced in the U.S.A., it is in sharp contrast to the war economy standards of books published in this country. But although the type is large and widely spread the result is not so very much more attractive, on balance, than many of the English economy publications. It is, however, a charming production and the binding and lettering a pleasure to look upon. The author, who is described as a poet of distinction and a Pulitzer Prizewinner will be unknown to the great majority of British readers. His verse consists principally of topical soliloquies in conventional form on the problems and emotions of war-time America and is of a type which, one can imagine, would find ready acceptance in the more discerning American journals. His work is thoughtful and often crisply epigrammatic although we hardly think it will have any wide appeal to readers over here. Typical is his poem, "Think of Religion":

Think of Religion, America. It is not
What they accuse us of,
Material contentment with our lot.
It is vehemence and love.

Vehemence for things they say are superseded,
That touch us and that teach
(And which in bad times may have gone unheeded),
In Lincoln's speech,

And love for the great land, mountain and waste,
River and lake and wood.
Now the dark towns and wilderness chaste
Must be made good,

Defended so that a lone man may speak,
In his own voice aloud,
His wisdom or his folly or his pique
Against the crowd.

What threatens that must perish. Now if we can
By valor and by pain
And labor we must wake the Rights of Man
In the stiff brain,

Make that religion, remember, keep in mind
And choke it down their gorge,
Who do not know what force superb and kind
Wintered at Valley Forge.

Few will quarrel with the sentiments expressed here.

The Weaver Birds is a wholly delightful book. It consists principally of narrative poems based on fairy tale, legend and folk lore and they are told with all the virtuosity and humour of an original poet. Why, you could take this book into an ill-assorted company of stockbrokers and poets, clerks, fishmongers, children, lawyers and cabinet ministers and, yes, even company-promoters, and start reading from it without driving them away. Mr. Serraillier has a flavour and a wit all his own and we daresay the day will come when his name will be as well known, and his work

as widely read, as Mr. Walter de la Mare's is at present. A short quotation from the narrative poems is difficult but we cannot resist quoting:

May gout cramp his little toe,
smelly fish kiss him,
and nothing that is stickiest
or slimiest miss him!

Ugsome frogs, plop down his throat
to chill his boiling belly,
and strings of loathly spawn muff
his neck in clammy jelly!

And the concluding lines of "The Weaver Birds" poem:

Heart to heart, wing to wing they flew
home to joy of long loving, to seven swans
afloat and sweeping harp. Ah paradise,
dear jungle! Over the tree-tops, over
the tiny-rippled river, beyond the mountains and
the wilderness they flew with feather o' yearning,
homebound, ah homebound.

And what a fragiley lovely tale is that of ' Urashima," based on an old Japanese legend. Here, too, for all—children and others—are merry new presentations of "Jack and the Beanstalk," "The Three Bears," and "The Cat and the Fiddle."

To conclude the book there is a small section of miscellaneous poems and fourteen-line poems called sonnets. We can see the King of the Sonnet-Makers scanning these with frigid disapproval but, nevertheless, they are good and more truly deserving of the name poetry than many of the tortured and twisted banalities which appear in impeccable sonnet form.

* * * * * *

Although unacknowledged, the substance of E. M. Stephenson's *T. S. Eliot and The Lady Reader* (Fortune Press, 6s.) has appeared in THE POETRY REVIEW and been found very helpful in schools and study circles. Perhaps Mrs. Stephenson is even more recondite and abysmal than her poet-hero in whom she finds greater significance and more profundities than he himself is aware of, but the implications of a great poet should be beyond himself as well as remote from the comprehension of the lay reader. A big burden is imposed on the little man. Singularly little has been published on contemporary poets and poetry; this may be the beginning of manuals on the big men—if there is more than one But if more commentaries are published we hope they will be available at a lower price. Six shillings is too much for 50 pages and for the earnest young student whose veneration for the modern prototypical master needs some protection against the Johnsonian strictures in a recent New Statement. But as Mrs. Stephenson advises at the end of her dissertation of that poem, "Read 'Mr. Profrock.'"

The Poet's Eye is a monument to publishing enterprise in the sixth year of an exhausting war, and also to the publisher's good taste (Frederick Muller, 10s. 6d.). It is an exquisite product, an individualistic collection of poems, some unfamiliar, that illustrate the good eyes—and also ears—of the greater English poets, more pene-

trating and exact than the pseudo-nature-loving "Georgians." By his varied, balanced selection Mr. Geoffrey Grigson shows his knowledge and appreciation of English poetry are not confined to new versifiers. This decorative volume is followed by another in the same series, *Sea Poems* chosen by Myfanwy Piper, the more attractive by virtue of the many unexpected and unfamiliar inclusions, not to be found in Mrs. Alice Hunt Bartlett's more comprehensive Sea Anthology. Certainly these "New Excursions into English Poetry" are not hack compilations. Each volume is adorned by sixteen highly decorative coloured lithographs.

No. 10 *Poetry London* has emerged as an imposing cloth-bound quarto of 264 pages, chiefly a collection of poems by writers who have not previously been published in this periodical—many with several pieces to their credit, T. W. Ramsey and Maurice Lindsay having six each, Daniel O'Connor, five, Iain Fletcher, four. Too many "Sonnets" and "Poems" suggest literary exercises without an animating subject: frequently obscurity and pretentiousness and the dolours of adolescence irritate the reader and the discipline of rhyme is scorned, although Stebie Smith is prodigal in a quatrain with an imposing title, "A Human Materialist at the Burning of a Heretic"—

"When shall that fuel fed fire grown fatter
Burn to consumption and a pitter patter
Of soft ash falling in a formless scatter
Telling Mind's death in a dump of Matter."

More comprehensible, mature, individual and unaffected are the five poems of Joan Snelling, an East-end factory girl of 16. She has the right and the ability to express herself and be taken seriously. The most valuable of the prose contributions is a lucid examination of *The Ancient Mariner* and *The Waste Land* as two types of imaginative creation, fundamentally alike but not identical.

In *Poems of a Land Girl* Beryl Miles describes musically, rhythmically and with deep delight the simple universal things she loves and has been moved by. Similarly sincere and impressionistic and personal are Gilbert Bullard's roving poems in *The Go Cart* (2s. 6d.)—happy memories, sounds and sights and experiences affectionately recorded.

* * * * * *

Opportunity is provided for the appreciation of music and poetry under unusually favourable and intimate conditions at the Ethical Church Hall, 4A Inverness Place, Queen's Way, Bayswater. Concluding meetings for this season: Mondays, April 16th and May 14th at 6.0 p.m.; Neville Braybrooke, Elizabeth King, and David Gascoyne, will be among the readers.

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The Speech Fellowship intends to organise a "Festival of Choral Speech" this summer—the first time since the war that it has been thought possible to arrange anything of the kind. It will be held at the Tavistock Little Theatre, Mary Ward Settlement, Tavistock Place, W.C.1, at 2.30 on Saturday, May 5th, 1945, and will include programmes by adult choirs and groups of senior boys and girls, showing some of the types of work that can be done in choral speaking. Further particulars can be had from the Speech Fellowship, 9 Fitzroy Square, London, W.1.

Dynamics of American Poetry: CIV

Eighteen Poems (Charles Scribner's Sons) is the eighth volume from James Boyd's pen, author of those fine and deservedly successful books, *Drums*, *Marching On*, *Long Hunt*, *Roll River*, *Bitter Creek*. "In his thoughtful, clean-cut pages the bitter and proud events of war and love, of ambition and intrigue, of the struggles and relationships of men and women, of the hopes and frustrations and the dreams and accomplishments which went into the making of this country from the Revolution through the last war were told, I think, as no one else has told them before." This from the foreword of Paul Green. Captured by poetry he could not but write it conveying the grief that was his, and must be ours, for those loved, the young men of America, the young men of the world. He had taken part in the first World War from which he returned a casualty, leaving him but to work and talk for the principles he believed in.

Let us begin with "Wedding Anniversary," which shows the artist and the poet:

It sometimes seems as if that snowy day
When, from your house and hill, the flying sleigh
With silver notes bore you and me away,
Were only just last year;
The black trees stand so clear,
So clear the snowy hill, the silver sleigh-bells shine,
So warm your narrow mitten lies in mine.

But when at other times I search my heart
And look upon my life in every part,
I feel that you have known me from the start,
I feel that you have known
Years that I seemed alone,
That in the bounty of your patient love
There are no days of mine it knows not of.

We will not miss the following "Sonnet." It too clearly expresses objection to the obscurity of the moderns:

If poets are not listened to, the blame
Is theirs. They speak unclearly, and are lost
In their own psychic maze and the intricate game
Of words. In a twisted world what matters most
Is simple statement, open to the least
Of men. No precious patterns hold the ear,
Nor can the chaotic spirit be released
By further chaos. Those in doubt and fear
Lean to the sure and fearless. Now to be heard
The poet must speak plainly. The obscure
Is powerless over violence. Each word
Must be inevitable, urgent, pure,
If people are to hear, above the roar,
The voice of those who know what speech is for.

Babette Deutsch is one of the thousands born in New York City, attended Barnard

College. After graduation she quickly showed a desire to write and became assistant to the editor of the *Political Science Quarterly*. Her first verse was published while she was still an undergraduate and her first book of poetry appeared two years after she left college. Since then both prose and poetry have drawn her and she has published several books of verse and two novels. In 1929 she won the Nation Poetry Prize. She is married and has two sons, and it seems to me one or both must have been taken in the armed forces. A very painful arresting poem appears in *Take Them, Stranger* (Henry Holt) called "The Sick":

The hospital is open to the sky—
History lying
In the odor of fresh amputations—
The wide cry
Travels across roads like severed veins
And little cities staring at their wounds
With eyeless faces.
There is no anteroom for music here,
No place for flowers,
No god brought down from childhood to console.
Only the savage sacrifice,
Only the stifled noise the dying make,
Among the twisted iron and torn brick
Odor of pain.
All men are brothers,
And we are members, one of another,
And we are sick.

Babette Deutsch sends to THE POETRY REVIEW, at our request, the following statement on poetry, with the comment: "I can think of nothing more appropriate than to quote from my book *This Modern Poetry*:

"In the poem, sound and picture, emotion and idea, work together to satisfy a hunger which sets man apart from the other beasts. The emotion is as old as his physical inheritance, but the music and the images and the ideas have altered with his changed circumstances, and poetry which takes account of these changes will speak most eloquently to the contemporary mind.

"Philosophers have applied various terms to humanity in an attempt to distinguish it from the rest of creation, but if man is a talking animal, so is the parrot, and if he is a political animal, so, in a truer sense, is the ant. Man is an imaginative animal.

"That is what gives meaning to his speech and may yet give meaning to his politics.

"That is why lovers are so often makers of verses. The physical delight of the lover finds its ideal counterpart in the imagination of the poet. The impulse toward union, be it of minds or bodies, from which, as the ancient legend runs, shall spring the seed of Helen and Achilles, perfect beauty joined with perfect power, is the hope of the race while life on earth persists.

"In this time, as in any other, the imagination of the major poet enacts that union, without ceasing to love reality."

How appreciative would Anna Hempstead Branch have been of the glowing foreword by Ridgeley Torrence to her *Last Poems* (Farrar & Rinehart, Inc.). Only once did the writer of this review meet Miss Branch. It was at the yearly poetry dinner of the Poetry Society of America at the Park Lane. Mr. Torrence seems to apologize for dwelling more upon her personality than upon her poetry, and quoting Edwin Arlington Robinson, "Poetry," he would say, "isn't anything you can talk about." I am, however, going to try to do it—but briefly. Since we are told that life is but a shadow, let us learn more about it, from "Shadow":

Into the silence of my heart
A love I may not take
Falls like the shadow of a bird
Into a shining lake.
Its happy wings I may not touch,
Its song is not for me,
But yet its shadow charms my soul
To passionate ecstasy.

and "The Errand":

Why am I calling you—
What are you to me and what am I to you?
There seems some solemn errand that you and I must do.

Let us rise and seek
The Vision that has made us—your cheek against my cheek—
Perhaps the bush will burst in flame. Perhaps the cloud will speak.

It was your look and eyes
That made me call to you. They were beautiful and wise.
Shall we not go together on some godlike enterprise?

Why am I calling you?
What are you to me and what am I to you?
There is some glorious errand that you and I must do.

The book is graced by a very spiritual picture of this writer. Mr. Torrence describes Miss Branch as extremely human, adding, "it is even possible that she was a sinner of sorts. I don't think that incompatible with her being also a saint. I recall St. Teresa's charming admonition to the young women who were trying to be her disciples: 'O my daughters, I know quite well that we cannot live without sins, but do try to keep from committing the same ones over and over, lest they become fixed habits.' " Miss Branch's constructive service at Christadora House seems to be something memorable.

Souvenir and Other Poems, by Eunice Adams (Bruce Humphries), is a collection of the writings of a young poet. They are attractive and in time Miss Adams may reach an enviable position. We will read "Night":

The night is beautiful;
It comes
On rushing, grey-clad wings.
The lawn is dark;
Only the irises
Gleam darkly purple
Brighter than before.

The whispering leaves,
On branches arching high,
Link lacy, shadowy fingers
O'er the land
I see the friendly darkness
Hovering low.

Of the same song genre we find:

You needn't say "I love you" more than once,
For when the last short word is past and spoken,
It keeps on singing, singing, through my brain,
And repeats itself a million times and over.

You needn't say "I love you" more than once;
My skies are brightened by one phrase alone;
For when your heart beats tympani for me, dear,
It wakes a thousand echoes in my own.

When one reads on the jacket of a book that ten to twenty thousand have been sold, one is startled. It would seem that any poet writing in any land, of his land and its conflict would be moved to unusual expression. Russell Davenport, author of *My Country* (Simon & Schuster), was born in 1889 in South Bethlehem, Pa., and after school days enlisted as a private in World War I, served seventeen months overseas and was twice awarded the Croix de Guerre. He was a Yale man, graduating in 1923. Recently he became prominent in the promotion of the campaign of Wendell Willkie. The book is 62 pages long—one continuous poem, descriptive of what he believes America to be, and desires. It occurred to me in reading it, it might easily be a screen play. What he says of America is splendidly said, and follows:

America is not a land of ease.
We have not paused from action to beget
Heroic simile and song and frieze;
We have no empire of the mind as yet,
Nor have we shed our light within the grave:
But, as the sons of enterprise and sweat,
Honour the quick, the strong, the free, the brave—
The mind whose thoughts are cradled in the hand—
The fierce emancipators of the slave
Exacting destiny of virgin land.
We are the builders of dynamic things,
Successors to the spires of Samarkand—
Boilers and bars, propellers, wheels and wings
To run and fly and dive at our behest,
Through which the mighty wind of freedom sings.
America is not a land of rest.

In the third canto, news of the death of the beloved son, killed in action, reaches the family, and Mr. Davenport lets his heart speak:

In the heart, when the dread word reaches into the homes of America
That he who was there like the sun has departed forever,
When sorrow falls as the night over the secret places
Of memory and laughter.

And the hungry shadows of death enclose the living.
What shall we say to those who have lost their soldiers?
What light have we to show, what words, beyond their tears?

There are so many good phrases as you go through this extraordinary book. Let me give you one:

But only those with courage to prepare
The chamber of the heart will celebrate
The wedding-day of truth and liberty.

Does it not occur to readers of poetry that they might occasionally enjoy the book more if there was not so much exuberant compliment about it on the jacket? This does not demote my thought of Mary Siegrist's poems, *Flame Rises on the Mountain* (The Exposition Press, New York). They are mostly in the free line which, for those of us who like the rhymed line, never reaches the same point of pleasure. Many of them are too long for present review, with paper and ink and men so scarce, so I will choose "Dedication" to give those who do not know of her métier:

Thee, thee would I follow—only thee,
Beauty, through sun-paths, and the all of bliss—
Through chaos, night-dark, eyeless storm—through hail
And the terrible lightning's play. . . . Only let be
That I shall see thy face, thy form. Give this:
That ever I shall know thou canst not fail
Me—nor yet I thee. And should I lose
The sight of thee, give but thy voice, for I
Shall know that voice against all sounds that are.
And should I lose both sight and sound, refuse
Not then this plea: Let not the springs run dry:
Still be thou near, who art not ever far!
And shouldst thou wear strange masks, strange shapes, even so
I yet shall know thee—I shall surely know! . . .

There are many poems concerning the different countries now involved in this cataclysm and from them we will not quote. They lack the impartiality of poetry. Passing over "World Peace Now," "Banner of Peace," "England Speaks," "Will You Arise O France in Your Beauty," "Czechoslovakia Speaks," Poland, China, Greece, Russia and the United Nations speak. How can we call these nations united at any time, on any grounds? "From a Minaret" follows:

Who has watched sunsets from a minaret
And worshipped them, that watcher nevermore
Will walk with small things. Lo! For him a door
Has opened widely on the Infinite.
He will go hungered on the streets of men
Forevermore, pining for space and wideness.
He will be sick for home as in a wilderness
Man sickens for his kind. Not ever again
Will he be fed with food, but he will be
The nursling of the gods. Another name

Has lightened in him. Fire from the heart of flame
Has fed him. Now only infinity
Can call and the sound reach the straining ears of his heart,
Dimming the years from this sky-home apart.

I am very sure that Walt Whitman would have been extremely enthusiastic about the work of Mary Siegrist.

The usual profuse compliment is to be found on the jacket of *The Years that the Locust Hath Eaten*, by Mildred Telford Barnwell (Manthorne & Burack, Inc.), but let us pass over it and enjoy the book! Poems concerning trees are seldom disappointing. We give you "Place of Refreshment":

I left the blazing city sky behind
And lost myself in woodland, cool and green—
The blazing brazen contact with mankind
Beat like wild hornets on a tired mind;
Tree tapestry, leaf-woven, hung above,
Moved gently, ever changing, yet serene.
I felt confusion worse confounded pass
Quite naturally, as if it had not been. . . .
And for the calm beneficence of trees
I humbly fell and thanked God on my knees.

Who has not mourned over ageing hands of one beloved? Mrs. Barnwell has done so in her short poem "Old Hands on a Coverlet":

Old hands on a coverlet, worn and well-veined,
Like road maps of a journey soon to end;
Not nervous, tense, like young hands with the journey all before—
But calm, serene as aspen after storm—
Resting. . . . Awaiting God of man and tree
As if you know the best is yet to be. . . .

Wise and Otherwise (Chapman & Grimes) is the first published collection of David L. Kirk's verses. The humour column of the Spokane *Daily Chronicle* saw their first appearance. Kirk's consideration of a pun is rather amusing, and follows:

A pun is not a worthy thing,
Although perchance the pun be good,
Although it have an artful ring,
A pun is not a worthy thing.
Ah, let the merry quipster sing,
But let us have it understood,
A pun is not a worthy thing,
Although perchance the pun be good.

"Viewpoint" handles the question of the draft and follows:

When he was free and twenty-one
And slim both fore and aft,
He was not enthusiastic,
One might say, about the draft.

Now he has had a change of heart,
A change in waist and weight,
A change of twenty years in age;
He thinks the draft is great.

The young never think of the change that will assuredly occur in their hands. The following short stanzas give it very clearly:

Gnarled old discoloured, lovely hands
That wrought so long and patiently,
Rest softly, now that you are done
With doing little things for me.

I hold you close in silent dread
That only old love understands
Knowing the last taut words are said,
Dear, tired, misshapen, blessed hands.

Lester Nicholas Recktenwald's publisher, Bruce Humphries, describes him as a school man and counsellor and considers him ably fitted to define the true meaning of a new tomorrow. We hear much of tomorrow and what it may bring after this dreadful war is over. In his letter to me of November 22nd, he tells me that *Hail Tomorrow* tries to pierce the surface of things and events to see what permanent substances remain for tomorrow's world. His last sentences in a quite lengthy paragraph strikes one as being worth while: "A future in which the individual possesses and carries his natural dignity and in which the energies of the complete person are utilized."

A short poem entitled "To Youth" we give:

You—and memories?
Leave them to those
Who have but few tomorrows.
The earth's expanse is wide,
Adventure-giving,
Wide, too, is the world
That lies within.
It has called;
It calls again
To broad frontiers
That lie beyond today.

And another, "The Simple Answer":

We often seek a simpler answer
To a complex situation.
A real simplicity
Cuts through the hardest
Mountain-high accretions,
This faculty distinguished,
Both in peace and war,
The men of ripe condition,
When bound by worn controls.
A Braddock falls,
A Washington arises
To his everlasting glory;
A Lincoln wins the verdict of the world;
The Douglas star is dull comparison.

At a moment when the whole world seems striving to agree through killing one another by the millions, let us finish this review by reading "The Matter of Mode":

High, seeming to split a straying cloud
He looked down and saw
An ant—the occupational man,
And he wondered:
His mode is not mine,
And mine not his:
How can he ever understand?
Earthed, he looked above him; ,
Against the straying cloud he saw
A working form,
And he wondered:
His mode is not mine,
And mine not his;
How can he ever understand?

Mrs. Crowell is no stranger to THE POETRY REVIEW. The American Editor has had the pleasure of telling of her books and talents: to quote, "Grace Noll Crowell is a writer rich through her life's experience, who tells of it radiantly in her many books. They number 15 volumes." Mrs. Crowell received the honour of being appointed Poet Laureate of Texas by the State Senate in 1935; selected as the American Mother of 1938 by the Golden Rule Foundation.

Between Eternities (Harper) is a slim, well-presented little volume, in good-sized print. There are three sons in the Crowell family, now grown to manhood, and in the poem entitled "There is a Sound" she bespeaks what must be in many hearts:

There is a sound across the darkened waters:
A sound that is not rain, nor is it sea—
It is the falling tears of all earth's mothers,
Weeping their hearts out in their agony.

It lifts above the roar and shock of battle,
Above the tumult of the warring years:
The steady mourning of the hurt and stricken,
And nothing but peace again will dry their tears;

Nothing but peace, and the unbroken promise
That never again need mothers pay the price,
And never again will any son be offered
Upon war's altar as a sacrifice.

Only thy healing hand, dear God, can stay it:
The war, the weeping—Master, stem, I pray,
The tide of battle and the never-ceasing
Sound of tears across the world today.

We cannot have too many voices speaking in a sympathetic diatribe against war.

Alice Hunt Bartlett

A REFLECTION IN A REVIEW

I feel that a protest should be made against certain statements in Dallas Kenmare's review of *Fall of a Tower* in the present number of THE POETRY REVIEW. To say that the destruction of fourteen thousand churches in air-raids is perhaps necessary as "a prelude to a rebirth of pure Christianity," and that "the destruction of the churches in air-raids may ultimately prove more an aesthetic than a spritiual loss" is surely a monstrous suggestion. Further, the statement that "the failure of organised religion can be held directly responsible for the immense tragedy of our age" is a perversion of the facts. The wave of criminality and dishonesty, the frightful extension of divorce, and the general lowering of the moral standards are the direct results of the drift *away from* organised religion.

It is true, of course, that individuals composing the Church are often weak and unworthy. "We have this treasure in earthen vessels" and many of the Church's severest critics are baptised members of that same Church who have fallen away and do not realise that they are thereby criticising their own selves. Still further, to say "the grass and red poppy reveal God more directly than many of the images and ecclesiastical paraphernalia designed and wrought by man" shows a pathetic lack of understanding. Certainly the grass and the poppy—indeed, all nature—help to reveal God, since God is Beauty, and all beauty comes from Him. But we can only come nearest to God through prayer and worship, and is it not right to surround our worship with as much magnificence as possible—music, lights, vestments, incense, etc.? If we have an audience with the King, do we not put on our best clothes? And should we do less for God? Our best may be poor and humble, but so long as it *is* our best, it will be accepted of God.

The subject is, of course, too vast to be discussed here, but as a sincere, though very fallible, member of Christ's Church, I cannot read such words without lifting my voice in protest.

Oxford, October 8th. WILTON COLE.

After reading Dallas Kenmare's article, "Romantic Realism," concerning Mr. Francis Berry's ageless hope—reflected in every century—that "the heavy Church is on the ground," I would like to point out that neither Mr. Berry himself, nor few others, could possibly think that this remark (typical of those anarchists who wish to see the realisation of a law, different from their individual interpretation of it and in less comfortable terms, done away with) can in any light be regarded as a prophecy. Nor do I think that the destruction of fourteen thousand churches can be regarded as a fulfilment of that prophecy when one considers that seventeen million houses were damaged at the same time and that such a disastrous eventuality is the obvious outcome of aerial warfare. If Mr. Berry were engaged in prophecy, he must have been what the moderns, with their ignorance of correct meanings, might call a "contemporary prophet" for, in 1938 and 1939, the likelihood of such devastation taking place was, to say the least of it, very real! But, be that as it may, the material destruction of these churches can surely not be the fulfilment of a wish to see the spiritual power of the Church, as an organisation, and of which these buildings are but manifestations in the praise of God, destroyed.

Which leads me to query, with some anxiety, Miss Kenmare's idea of Christianity

which she maintains is held by "many thinkers" to-day. It is a dangerous doctrine—to place the individual supreme judge over his choice of religion, for God then becomes the second on the list, after the "I" has chosen in what light He must be regarded and in what most pleasing manner. He must be worshipped, but it is also an indirect insult to Him. For it is suggesting, subtly, that God, in the person of Christ, did not know what He was doing when He lived according to the laws of the Church, being circumcised and praying in the temple, and ordaining Peter as head of His Church upon earth and giving orders to his disciples to establish the teaching of it in all places of the world.

If you deny, as certainly you must in adhering to this creed, that Christ was right in beating the buyers and sellers out of the temple, for no other reason than that they were profaning the Church of His Father, then you are denying His Perfection and therefore His Divinity, and in doing this you at once forgo your right to call yourself a Christian.

I find Miss Kenmare's woolly pantheism very worrying in this age when all our ideas of God or of right or wrong are intent, with equivocating zeal, on including all creeds and beliefs within this compass in order to please everyone, so that they succeed only in slipping away from truth, which has only one form though, in our search for her, we may view her from many angles. Miss Kenmare would substitute the "grass and the red poppy" for man-made churches and a love for God, through nature, for an understanding of Him through teaching. True religion must include both, but surely to worship God by building with the toil and sweat of your heart and hands is more pleasing to Him than to love, with aesthetic appreciation, His image in the beauty of nature, which He has created *for us* in the first place?

We are, certainly, in great need of an "indomitable Christian power," but not as an obscure love of all things good or bad. As a great lover, yes, but also as an arbitrator of Justice—a something higher than man, to show him God's laws and help him to obey them, not as something to which, when the occasion seems fitting, man may bend an ear and find in the shadow of a mountain or the thrill of his own heart-beats a sudden illumination of all that Godhead means and all that God would have him do. We, to-day, are too afraid of intolerance to dare own a conviction. I hope this will change.

Melbourne, Derby, October 6th. MACDONALD WALKER.

It would interest me very much to know why Mr. Maurice Lindsay (on page 250 of THE POETRY REVIEW) is convinced to the point of printed expression, that "wishy-washy whining" would make a suitable gift-book for the Band of Hope? Surely the President of the United Kingdom Band of Hope Union, i.e. Viscountess Snowden, J.P., or the Chairman, Cyril W. Black, J.P., or the majority of the Committee and members of this Union, may be regarded as possessors of normal healthy mentalities, to whom wishy-washiness is as abhorrent as it is to Maurice Lindsay. "Where there is no vision the people perish." Yes! but vision has two eyes and should look both up and down, seeing that which is ugly and true, as clearly as that which is beautiful and true. That drunkenness tends to become an increasingly ugly fact among the youth of to-day is a truth. And it takes more than a wishy-washy character to steadfastly refuse the popular invitation to "come and have one."

Why print implied contempt of any work which has helped men and women—especially if, as Mr. Lindsay evidently thinks, they are of weaker mind than himself.

Shelley's Cottage, Lynmouth. N. H. BOULTON.

THE FALLACIES OF ARGUMENT CONCERNING G. M. HOPKINS

1 There are *no* outriding feet in the "Deutchland."

2 An outriding foot is a recognised *extra-metrical* effect (i.e. over and above the existing metre). But the long . . . 7-syllabled feet of the "Deutchland" are strictly metrical.

3 Outriding feet belong to counterpointed verse.

4 Counterpointed verse, which supposes a well-known and unmistakable or unforgettable *standard* rhythm. The "Deutchland" is not counterpointed.

5 Counterpoint is excluded by sprung rhythm.

6 Therefore the "Deutchland" is in sprung rhythm.

All this is important. It is Hopkins' line of argument on sprung rhythm and on his poem *The Wreck of the Deutchland* in a letter to Bridges, written from Wales in August 1877. But I would pick out and re-assert the following:

Outriding feet belong to counterpointed verse.

Counterpoint is excluded by sprung rhythm.

Therefore, I say, it would seem that outrides and sprung rhythm are incompatible.

Turn then to his preface to the poems. The argument there is as follows:

1 Sprung rhythm, as used in this book, is measured by feet of from one to four syllables, regularly, and for particular effects any number of weak or slack syllables may be used.

2 Hence sprung rhythm differs from running rhythm in having or being only one nominal rhythm, instead of three, but . . . in having twice the flexibility.

3 *But strict sprung rhythm cannot be counterpointed.*

4 Two licences are natural to sprung rhythm. The one is rests, as in music. The other is hangers, or *outrides*, that is, one, two, or three slack syllables added to a foot and not counted in the nominal scanning.

5 Nature and history of sprung rhythm:

(*a*) it is the rhythm of common speech and of written prose when rhythm is perceived in them;

(*b*) it is the rhythm of all but the most monotonously regular music;

(*c*) it is found in nursery rhymes, etc. (dropped terminations);

(*d*) *it arises in common verse when reversed or counterpointed, for the same reason.* Look again at Paragraph 4. "Two licences are natural to sprung rhythm . . . the other is hangers or outrides. . . ." Therefore, I say, it would seem that outrides and sprung rhythm are complimentary. . . .

Hopkins' theory (more than his practice) has been the subject of much discussion among writers who find the letter more important than the spirit, or among those like Hopkins whose intellectual curiosity compels them to examine the tools of their trade. Here are two arguments on the same subject. I set them side by side, that their value may be more truly assessed. I have not juggled with words or left out anything essential to the reasoning. I have made no précis. The italics are mine, but the words are Hopkins' own, and they deserve close attention. Does this prove the danger and flexibility of argument?

Baslow. M. D. HASTINGS.

The Premium Editor's Report

THE writing of poetry seems to be an affair of tides and whereas last time I was engulfed in a flood and in danger of being drowned in my efforts to find the victorious bard, on this occasion the tide was at its ebb and left the victor (or is it victoress) stranded upon my desk in beautiful isolation. Why this should be so is difficult to understand unless and in spite of my remarks in the last issue regarding inspiration (backed by a sonnet) all or nearly all of my competitors straightway sat down to do it again armed with nothing more potent than the will to win. Whatever determination may accomplish in more mundane affairs it is a hopeless condition of mind for the making of poetry and resulted in more verse of the duller sort than I liked or than did even meagre justice to the level which we have with such effort established for this competition.

One thing should be mentioned and emphasised, although it has been brought to the notice of competitors many times, that is the sudden lapse, undetected through insufficient care or revision, which brings a poem several rungs down the ladder which we are holding so assiduously against the cliffs of Parnassus. These lapses are many and various. Punctuation, faulty metre, rhyme words, grammatical errors, illogicality, non-sequiturs were all present, testifying once more to the lack of hard polishing work without which the greatest poets have not dared, if rumour can be believed, to launch their work upon the world. But the main trouble was the fact that my clients too often sat down to write a poem around an idea or a thought. A very wise friend of mine has stated that thoughts cannot make a poem and I know of nothing more to the point. I would add that the mind can easily mar one when it is used as more than an efficient tool. Efficient it must be and the temptation to any one who can versify capably is to make verses and to attempt vainly to substitute cerebration for emotional compulsion, or, if you will, inspiration.

The premium on this occasion is awarded to Miss Jean Kenward, Marylebone, W., for a poem which had for me no rival. I propose in future to publish the premium poem (or poems) in this report and here it is.

THE FOOL

Not in the tumbled artifice of cities
Were his loose limbs, his lovely lip engendered,
But where the blackbird primed his April ditties
And delicately to his truelove tendered
Morsels of seed and olive warily
Wrapped in an evening and as frail as light.
There the mild arms of meadows merrily
Made him their burden, and the incredible night
Fed him and swaddled him in little stars.
Who then shall mock at his fidelity
Dubbing him wastrel and a man of dreams?
He has the prophets' old temerity
And walks with angels, whose fair vision seems
So bright, so hot, so powerful, he knows
No sleep but in the shadow of the rose.

Here is that lyrical note which is fundamentally the excuse for the poetic form of

writing. The music rises quite naturally and with an unforced harmony which suggests to me a truer and more resonant instrument than the intellect. One does not think out such lines as the second, "Were his loose limbs, his lovely lip engendered" and this I think is not an example of "alliteration's artful aid," but wears that "grace beyond the reach of Art" which poets snatch so seldom. I chose this poem not only for its delicacy of imagination, its tenderness and the beauty of its unexpected imagery but, more than all, for that casual sureness which rejects utterly any suggestion of painstaking or stressful composition. This song came spontaneously from, shall we say, the heart and sings as carelessly as Miss Kenward's own blackbird. The final couplet completes a beautiful thing with an inspired stroke, enriching the whole with an uncalculated certainty which makes the poem look like the work of a moment. Indeed, I should be surprised to hear that it made any appreciable inroad upon Miss Kenward's leisure beyond those timeless few minutes during which, so seldom, inspiration may possess the poet.

The names of the unsuccessful, but most worthy competitors, are given alphabetically in the following lists:

HIGHLY COMMENDED

Major T. Bouch, Warwick;
Norman Alliston, Herbert, Swindon;
Edward Gordon Oxenham, HarrowWeald;
Juanita Peirse, Halesowen.

COMMENDED

F/O A. K. Barton R.A.F., Andreas, I.O.M.;
R. E. Boulton, Winscombe;
Henry Clayton, Birmingham;
Julian Dudley, Melbourne, Derby;
R. Ewbank, Queen's College, Oxford;
Mrs. G. A. Firkins, Wolverhampton;
Jessie B. Heard, Bristol, 7;
W.J. F. Hutcheson, Milngavie;
Mary Savidge, Bradfield St. George;
Harry Sefton, Lytham;
George Tayler, Chingford, Essex;
Winifred Thorn, Uxbridge;
Eric Van Hagen, London, N.
Teresa Vasey, Selsey;
M. Wardle, Gorton.

The usual premium offer for the best poem or poems submitted to the Premium Editor during the month (without limitation of subject) is continued. Not more than four lyrics or one long poem should be submitted. MSS. should reach "The Premium Editor, THE POETRY REVIEW, 33 Portman Square, London, W.1," by April 1st, accompanied by stamped addressed envelope, and if criticism is desired, 5s. should be sent. It is essential that entrants to this competition be members of The Poetry Society or registered subscribers to THE POETRY REVIEW, and that each poem bears the name and address of the author. (Entries received after the formal closing date are carried forward to the next adjudication.)

THE GREENWOOD PRIZE FOR 1945

The Poetry Society is empowered by the executors of the late Mrs. Julia Wickham Greenwood to offer the sum of £20 as the Shirley Carter Greenwood Prize for 1945 for the best single poem in open competition addressed "The Greenwood Premium 33 Portman Square, London, W.1," before July 1st; only one poem to be submitted by any one competitor, length not exceeding 250 lines; no previously-published poem

may be entered; full name and address of author must be given on each poem and a stamped addressed envelope enclosed. (If a *non-de-plume* is adopted, name and address of sender must be given in a closed envelope bearing the pseudonym.) The winning poem shall be printed in THE POETRY REVIEW and may be reprinted at the discretion of the Poetry Society and the adjudicator may reserve near winners for publication in THE POETRY REVIEW. This annual prize is assuming a high authority and significance, becoming the recognised highest annual award for a poem.

£10 FOR POEMS OF PLACE

THE POETRY REVIEW is provided with another premium by Mrs. A. Dorothy Holmes, a Shropshire member of The Poetry Society whose *Storm Wrack* and *Cotswolds Calling* have gone round the world in aid of desirable causes. She offers £10 annually in competition for poems of place. Recent anthologies have reminded us how largely landscape poems bulk in English poetry. The songs of the fighting men in the last war, collected in *Soldier Poets*, were largely concerned not with battle but with the familiar places of home. Every issue of THE POETRY REVIEW contains beautiful examples of this genre.

The theme affords ample scope, its only limitation being that a definite place must be dealt with. A ramble over the countryside would not be eligible although a view from Snowdon or Skiddaw would be permissible and even a county might be celebrated. Less than a hundred lines should suffice and songs and lyrics rather than factual narrative poems are preferred. All entries for the 1945 competition must be typewritten and bear the name and address of the author, accompanied by a stamped adressed envelope—a 1d. stamp will suffice, and must be addressed to "The Holmes Prize, THE POETRY REVIEW, 33 Portman Square, London, W.1," not later than June 1st. The judges may divide the prize money into three parts—a first award of £5, and two of £2 10s. All entries shall remain at the disposal of the adjudicators until the award is published, and the winning poems and any other specially mentioned entries may be published in THE POETRY REVIEW.

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We regret to have to record the deaths of Lord Desborough, for 30 years a Vice-President of The Poetry Society, who included an intense appreciation of poetry among his many interests; of Major Arthur Corbett Smith, a life member and Vice-President, a man of extraordinary versatility, at one time prominently associated with the BBC, of whose efforts and achievements a handsome memorial record has already been published; and of Capt. L. Cranmer-Byng, for many years a member of the Council of the Poetry Society, a speaker and contributor to the POETRY REVIEW on Chinese Poetry, in which he was deeply versed. His reasoned article on the Cultural Use of Leisure in the POETRY REVIEW a dozen years ago had a great influence and was widely discussed when reprinted as a pamphlet.

We have good reason to believe that after this issue THE POETRY REVIEW will appear more regularly, that the time-lag will be eliminated and normal bi-monthly issues approached and maintained. We regret the natural uncertainty and anxiety many readers have experienced owing to the delayed issues and the possibility of the copies having miscarried. We thank them for their patience as well as their expressions of regard for the POETRY REVIEW.